DH
DECCAN HERALD
The Power of Good

Verstappen wins Azerbaijan Grand Prix

Classy Dutch driver claims his first victory in Baku

Page 16

Gadchiroli's transformation as India's biggest steel hub gathers steam

Page 10

भारत सरकार
GOVERNMENT OF BHARAT
सत्यमेव जयते

Beginning of the GST Bachat Utsav

on the Auspicious Occasion of **Navratri**

From today, lower GST rates are applicable across the Country

On most of the daily use items, GST is 0% or 5%

Now, primarily only 2 tax slabs

99% of Goods and Services are either tax-free or have a 5% or 18% GST

Groceries

From ****** To 18/12/5% ****** NIL/5%
Savings upto 13%

Daily Essentials

From ****** To 18/12% ****** 5%
Savings upto 13%

Clothing & Footwear

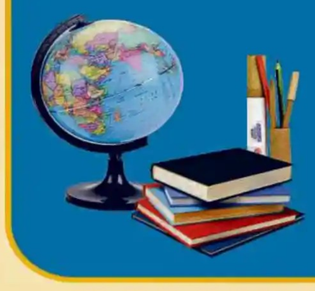
From ****** To 12% ****** 5%
Savings upto 7%

Health & Life Insurance

From ****** To 18% ****** NIL
Savings upto 18%

Medicines

From ****** To 12% ****** NIL/5%
Savings upto 7-12%

Stationery

From ****** To 5/12% ****** NIL/5%
Savings upto 7%

GST rate reduction on these as well

Tractor (upto 1800 cc)

Savings: around ₹40,000

Small Cars (upto 1500 cc)

Savings: around ₹70,000

Bikes/Scooters (upto 350 cc)

Savings: around ₹8,000

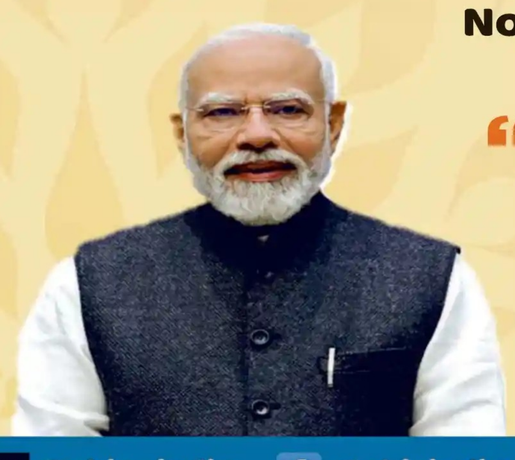
Television

Savings: around ₹3,500

Air Conditioner

Savings: around ₹2,800

Now, every home will have more savings and plenty of happiness



"With these new GST reforms, every family in the country will benefit immensely. Everyone including the poor, the neo-middle class, the middle class, farmers, women, students and youth will gain from the tax reductions."

Narendra Modi
Prime Minister

GST- Better & Simpler!

For the complete list of reduced rates & other GST changes please scan

@cbic_india @cbicindia @CBICINDIA @cbicindia @CBICIndia www.cbic.gov.in

CBC 15502/13/0020/2526

Five held for moral-policing couple

BENGALURU, DHNS: Five people were arrested in Kanakapura on the city outskirts for allegedly moral policing a Hindu man and a Muslim woman and partially shaving their heads in public.

The incident occurred on Saturday in Indiranagar Layout, Bengaluru South district. The arrested are Sheikh Kabeer, Suhail Shariff, Syed Nayaz, and Nawaz Khan. The identity of the fifth accused is unclear.

The woman, Hasina, 34, married for over a decade and mother of a son, separated from her husband six months ago after her relationship with fisherman Mahesh, 42, became public.

On Saturday, Hasina and Mahesh were caught by her relatives, who assaulted them with slippers and tonsured them.

The police reached the scene, brought the situation under control, and arrested the suspects following a complaint by the victims. The suspects were booked under relevant sections of the BNS. "The two were in a relationship. Unable to bear this, the woman's family assaulted and tonsured them. The arrested have been remanded to judicial custody," said R Sreenivas Gowda, Superintendent of Police, Bengaluru South district.

Five arrested over brawl ahead of police chief's city rounds

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Malleswaram police on Saturday arrested five men for attacking a person over a trivial row, hours before Police Commissioner Seemant Kumar Singh went on surprise city rounds.

Around 8 pm, the injured Mohammed Javed and the five suspects — Afzal Khan, 36, Syed Wasim, 26, Junaid, 22, Syed Hafeez, 24, and Salim Pasha, 37 — were at Star Te a Shop on 4th Main Road, Malleswaram.

"Due to some personal issues, an argument broke out between the victim and the suspects. The victim was then attacked and sustained injuries," a police officer said.

The police later tracked down the suspects and arrested them under relevant sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and the Arms Act.

A little after 10 pm, Singh began his night rounds for the first time since taking charge as city police chief. Officers above the rank of sub-inspector took part in the special drive across 11 divisions.

A day earlier, all Deputy Commissioners of Police and officers from the Central Crime Branch (CCB) conducted a large-scale raid against rowdies across the city.

Roads break down as civic body delays funded repair projects

Challenges in inter-agency coordination key obstacle

NAVEEN MENEZES
BENGALURU, DHNS

Just as Bengaluru's traffic crawls, so do the projects meant to ease the commute.

Nearly two years after approving Rs 2,600-crore worth of works such as white-topping, asphalting, and development of high-density corridors (HDC), progress has barely scratched the surface.

When the now-dissolved Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) was under fire for broken roads two years ago, it identified 600 km of critical stretches for development.

The civic body opened a separate bank account to clear contractor payments on time and ensure faster completion.

Despite providing funds, projects remain far from complete two monsoons later.

Official records show the government finalised selecting construction firms for the Rs 1,700-crore white-topping project in April 2024.

In November 2024, the government completed formalities to implement a Rs 694-crore project for asphalting 390 km of roads.

The development of 109-km of high-density corridors costing Rs 273 crore was approved in December 2023.

An additional Rs 89.3 crore was allocated for maintenance. Regarding physical progress, the BBMP completed only 21.6 km (about 30%) of the 143.68 km under white-topping.

The asphalting project covered just 20 km against the 390-km target, while the HDC project achieved less than 30% progress.

A senior GBA official cited difficulties in inter-agency coordination as a key obstacle.

"The HDC project suffered delays because it depended on Namma Metro and BWSSB works. On Bannerghatta Road, we had to wait for pipeline work. On the Hebbal-Nagawara stretch, metro construction blocked progress. White-topping projects also require traffic police clearance, which is not easy to secure," he said.

He admitted asphalting work should have been undertaken during the summer, but the window was missed, pushing schedules into monsoon, which further delayed work.

At a review meeting on Saturday, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah reportedly refused additional grants to the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA), citing pending works and mounting unpaid bills.

White-topping projects require traffic police clearance, which is not easy to secure, a GBA official said. DH FILE PHOTO

Road projects at glance

Project	Sanctioned funds	Total length	Progress so far
White-topping	Rs 1,700 cr	138-km	21.6 km (30%)
Asphalting	Rs 694 cr	390 km	20 km (5%)
High Density Corridor	Rs 273 cr	109 km	29.80 km (27%)

'Lack of focus & fear of losing the job'

Urban expert RK Mishra has expressed disappointment.

"These projects were primarily picked because of the problems citizens faced during past rainy seasons. Yet, engineers have shown no urgency to complete the work. It shows there is a lack of focus and fear of losing the job," he said, adding East Bengaluru would not have suffered as much as it has now had the Rs 694-crore asphalting project been complete.

HONOURING ANCESTORS

Devotees perform rituals on Mahalaya Amavasya, marking the last day of 'Pitru Paksha', at the Kashi Vishwanath Swamy Temple in Bengaluru on Sunday. DH PHOTO/MS MANJUNATH

Women form less than 9% of state police, says NLSIU report

Exposes how systemic hurdles keep them out

BENGALURU, DHNS

A new report by the National Law School of India University (NLSIU) has criticised the Karnataka State Police (KSP), highlighting a significant shortfall in female representation and a systemic failure to create an inclusive environment.

Women make up only 8.91% of the Karnataka police force, placing the state 17th nationally, below the average of 12.32%, the 'Women in the Karnataka State Police: Experiences, Challenges and Opportunities Assessment Report 2024' has revealed.

Of Karnataka's 9,081 women police personnel, 8,937 serve in the civil wing. The armed police have none in the district armed reserve and just 144 across 12 KSRP battalions.

The research team, comprising Devyani Srivastava, Laksha Kalappa Baleyada and Vidya Pai, noted that women's representation varies across districts, ranging from 10% to 18%.

Districts with higher Human Development Index scores show marginally better figures, but the overall trend is stagnant. Representation in investigating ranks is particularly poor, with women accounting for only 5.97%.

Sone of the key shortcomings are:

Policy & perception: A dominant view in the force is that women are needed mainly for cases of gender-based violence, a narrow perception that limits their potential in wider policing roles.

Infrastructure & service conditions: Women personnel continue to face poor facilities, including the lack of clean, separate washrooms and restrooms. The report also flags the disproportionate use of disciplinary "memos" against them, often viewed as a tool of intimidation.

Recruitment & training: The report calls for dropping gender-specific titles such as woman police constable or woman head constable in favour of neutral nomenclature. It also recommends ending gender-segregated training.

Sexual harassment: The report urges a zero-tolerance policy, pressing the Karnataka State Police to fully comply with the POSH Act, 2013, and establish functional internal committees in all administrative units.

Of Karnataka's 9,081 women police personnel, 8,937 serve in the civil wing. The armed police have none in the district armed reserve and just 144 across 12 KSRP battalions. DH FILE PHOTO

Recommendations

For the Karnataka State Police (KSP):

- Draw up a Recruitment Action Plan with district-specific targets and awareness drives.
- Post more women in frontline roles such as patrol and traffic.
- Improve basic facilities, including separate washrooms and barracks.
- Hold regular meetings with families of women personnel to build trust and support for their work.

For the state government:

- Raise the reservation quota for women in the police force to 33%.
- Review the State Police Act to make gender equality a statutory requirement.
- Frame a comprehensive Gender Action Plan with a multi-stakeholder committee.

Cop among two arrested for robbery

BENGALURU, DHNS: A head constable and his friend were arrested by the Avalahalli police on Sunday for allegedly robbing a woman.

The arrested are Satyan, who is posted at the DJ Halli police station, and his friend Jagadish, an auto-rickshaw driver. Both are in their 40s.

According to the police, Jagadish had assaulted and robbed his female friend of a gold chain and handed it over to Satyan, who allegedly pawned it and split the money.

The police arrested the duo after the victim lodged a complaint. The police also recovered the pawned gold chain.

A report has been sent to the Deputy Commissioner of Police (East) for further action against Satyan, an officer said. Further investigation is on.

Special train to Jog Falls

BENGALURU, DHNS: The SWR will operate a special express train between Yeshwantpur and Talguppa (the nearest station to Jog Falls) to clear the extra rush during Dasara. It will halt at Tumakuru, Tiptur, Arsikere, Birur, Tarikere, Bhadravati, Shivamogga Town, Anandapuram, and Sagara Jambagaru.

RR Nagar residents stage protest over axing of healthy trees

BENGALURU, DHNS

Residents of RR Nagar staged a silent protest on Sunday after five healthy trees were cut overnight in front of an upcoming jewellery store on Jawaharlal Nehru Road.

The protest was triggered when locals tried to stop tree-cutting at another construction site nearby, raising questions about selective enforcement of rules.

"Why was the jeweller allowed to cut five trees while others are not even permitted to trim branches?," people at the site asked.

Activist Suresh Bhat of NGO Hasiru said that tree-felling often takes place on weekends to evade scrutiny. "They cut them on Saturday evenings, when government offices are shut. By Monday, the damage is done," he told *DH*.

RR Nagar has seen widespread illegal felling, with over 140 healthy trees lost in four years, including 12 in 2023 alone, activist Joseph Hoover said. "The BBMP's Forest Department must be held accountable. Bribes of up to Rs 1 lakh are paid to cut healthy trees, while our attempts to cut down dead trees in parks are not permitted," he alleged.

Residents stressed the value of mature trees. "If a 40-year-old tree is cut, a sapling cannot compensate for decades. Trees are more precious than gold and diamonds," said activist Rachana Ravikiran.

Former contractor GK Ramachandra added that many trees were planted by BEML and the BDA when RR Nagar was developed. "Now, for the sake of businesses, they are being destroyed," he said.

Citizens said promises made during the pandemic to plant saplings were never fulfilled. Through their protest, they urged urgent action to protect greenery and prevent future generations from being left with suffocation and poor air.

A manager at the jeweller's store in another part of the city said the RR Nagar outlet had halted work over a year ago. "The outlet was set to open in March, but was withheld due to some issue. The shop has not been handed over to the company yet."

JOSEPH HOOVER
Activist

"The BBMP's Forest Department must be held accountable. Bribes of up to Rs 1 lakh are paid to cut healthy trees, while our attempts to cut down dead trees in parks are not permitted.

The protesters placed placards and banners at Rajarajeshwari Nagar on Sunday. DH PHOTO/PUSHKAR V

◆ IN THE CITY ◆

GENERAL

Navratri Special Lecture: Dolls in Indian Tradition; SR Leela to attend; Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Race Course Road; 11 am

CULTURAL

Youth Dasara-2025: Devotional Programme; Vidya Bhushan to attend; Yuvapatha, 4th Block, Jayanagar; 5.45 pm.

Music festival: Dr PB Srinivas Memorial; Sadguru Sai Charitable Trust, Pattareddy Palya, Kanakapura Road; 4.30 pm.

Drama: 'Dafan' by Puneeth Kumar; Organised by Kannada Sahitya Koota; Rashtrakavi Kuvempu Kalakshetra, Jalahalli; 5.30 pm.

◆ CITY WEATHER ◆

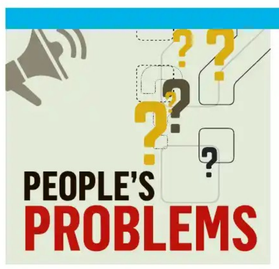
FORECAST

Generally cloudy sky with one or two spells of rain or thundershowers

TEMPERATURES

Maximum	28.0°C
Minimum	20.0°C
Rainfall (as of 8:30 am)	--
Humidity (as of 5:30 pm)	70%
Sunset (Sep 22)	6:17 pm
Sunrise (Sep 23)	6:09 am
Moonrise	5:34 am
Moonset	5:59 pm

(Relevant data recorded at 5.30 pm) Source: IMD



Need a hand? Write to us

Letters of grievances are pouring in and we are doing our best to accommodate as many as possible. Readers may write in to highlight civic problems affecting their locality and we will help address them in an interactive and effective manner.

Grievances and issues related to public utility agencies such as Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP), Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB), Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC) and Bangalore Electricity Supply Company Limited (Bescom) would be highlighted in the weekly column.

The writeups, which could be accompanied by photographs highlighting the problems, will be published on Mondays. Mail your grievances to: peoplesproblems @deccanherald.co.in

Kengeri bus terminal needs urgent repairs

Thousands of people travel daily through the Kengeri bus terminal on KSRTC and BMTC buses. However, the condition of the bus terminal is concerning.

At the very entrance, one can see a bumpy, uneven surface that was last asphalted a decade ago. Similarly, at the exit gate, there are deep potholes filled with rainwater and an uneven surface. In the front area, where several Mysuru-bound non-stop buses stop, the ground is a cesspool, and water splashes onto waiting passengers during the rainy season.

Furthermore, unauthorised vendors, such as fruit and flower sellers, are blocking crucial space in front of the bus terminal. It is questionable whether the KSRTC or BBMP has permitted them to conduct business in this area.

It is time for Transport Minister R Ramalinga Reddy to visit this location along with the KSRTC managing director to see the state of affairs firsthand. They are requested to order the asphalting of the bus terminal vicinity and to keep the surrounding areas clean and orderly by deploying security guards, thereby upholding Bengaluru's reputation as the Garden City.

N Nanjundaswamy
KHB Layout, Bandemutt, Kengeri

Reclaiming Basavanagudi footpaths

Following are the challenges faced by residents of Basavanagudi, Ward No 154:

Unauthorised constructions with huge elevated ramps by property owners have left no space for pedestrians.

Vehicles are permanently parked on the road in front of these unauthorised constructions on footpaths, making it inconvenient for other vehicles.

Some residents with a sense of civic duty who maintain a small stretch of footpath find vehicles parked on it by violators.

Violators have commercialised their car parking spaces and garages for business purposes.

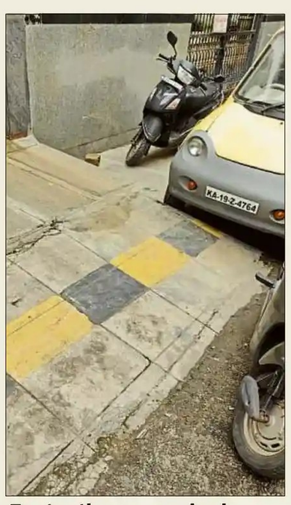
If objections are raised, violators resort to road rage.

Neither the BBMP nor the law seems to be taking action against such violations.

It appears that engineers from the BBMP's NR Colony office have colluded with the violators and are even asking them to file complaints against the original complainants.

The violators are creating a nuisance for the residents of East Anjaneya Temple Street, Basavanagudi. The engineers have neither served notices nor shown any inclination to penalise the violators.

President
Basavanagudi Ward No 154 Residents' Association



Footpaths encroached upon in NR Colony.

Two pose as food delivery executives to identify shops for theft

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Siddapura police arrested two men from Rajasthan who allegedly posed as food delivery executives to identify shops for theft, leading to the seizure of wire coils worth Rs 5 lakh.

The case began with a complaint on August 19 by a shop owner on Jayanagar 1st Block, who found his store ransacked, the door half open, and 80 to 90 wire coils of brands such as Finolex, Anchor, Havells, Polycab and Sudharak missing. The shop's CCTV DVR had also been stolen.

Based on a tip-off, the police arrested the suspects, Pemaram, 35, and Laxman Ram, 32, near Kempegowdanagar. They were found with the scooter used in the crime.

During interrogation, they admitted to posing as Swiggy delivery executives to survey shops and later returning at night to break locks with cutters and iron rods.

Acting on their disclosure, the police raided their residence and seized 72 coils stashed under the stairs. The police said both are habitual offenders with more than seven cases against them in the city.

Man abducted, murdered over Rs 10,000 debt

BENGALURU, DHNS: An 18-year-old delivery executive was kidnapped and murdered by a money lender and his associates for failing to repay a Rs 10,000 debt.

The Tavarekere police registered an FIR on September 8 following a medico-legal case from the hospital where Deepak Raj died a day after being brutally attacked by Soma, a money lender, and his associate Rajesh, a habitual offender.

The case was transferred to the Jnanabharathi police on September 13 due to jurisdictional issues.

On September 7, Soma and Rajesh had called Raj to an isolated spot at Manganahalli Gudde, assaulted him, and took away his two-wheeler with the help of unidentified associates.

The suspects then summoned his brother Praveen, 20, assaulted him, and handed over an injured Raj. He was taken home and later declared dead at the hospital.

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Bengaluru Monday, September 22, 2025 Pages 18 Vol 78 No 263 ₹7

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DH

DECCAN HERALD

The Power of Good

Indian openers' fury shatters Pak hopes

Abhishek, Gill deliver in six-wicket win

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State

Aland 'vote theft': EC blatantly lying, says Priyank

P.2

Nation

Get ready for SIR rollout: EC to state poll officers

P.8

State

Belur tense after Ganesha idol desecration P.2

Sports

Sydney blazes track in rain P.13

H-1B fee hike only for new applications, says US

$100,000 amount is a one-time charge, clarifies White House

NEW DELHI, DHNS

In a major relief to existing H-1B visa holders, the White House clarified that the staggering $100,000 fee imposed on non-immigration visa petitions would be a one-time charge and the new norms would be applicable only to fresh applications.

The clarification came hours after US President Donald Trump signed a proclamation to the effect that sparked panic and confusion among techies, forcing some of them to scramble back to America.

"H-1B visa holders can leave and re-enter the country to the same extent as they normally would. Those who already hold H-1B visas and are currently outside of the country will not be charged to re-enter," Karoline Leavitt, the White House Press Secretary, posted on X to allay fears among H-1B visa holders.

Leavitt also clarified that the $100,000 fee (approximately Rs 90 lakhs), is not an annual charge but a one-time fee. The executive order will come into effect from the next lottery cycle among the next batch of visa applicants.

The clarifications come as a huge relief for Indian nationals currently working in the US on H-1B visas who were apprehensive that they would be burdened with an annual levy, and an additional cost also while re-entering the country.

In a written statement, the State Department, while citing several statistics, said the changes are aimed at curbing abuses that "undermine national security" by outsourcing firms that replace US workers with cheaper foreign labour.

The foreign science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) workers in the US have doubled between 2000 and 2019 to nearly 2.5 million, it said.

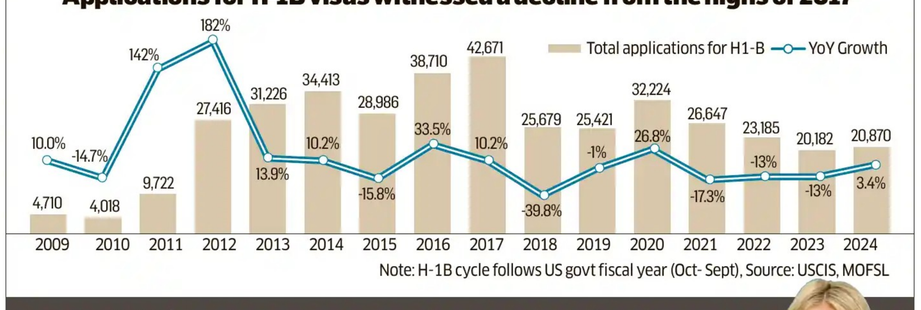
"No more will these Big Tech companies or other big companies train foreign workers. Train Americans. Stop bringing in people to take our jobs," US Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick, said, standing beside Trump, who in the Oval Office signed the proclamation titled 'Restriction on Entry of Certain Non-immigrant Workers'.

H-1B visas are non-immigration work visas, granted for three years and extendable up to six years, to highly skilled foreign workers who are sponsored by companies to work in the US.

Annually, the State Department approves 85,000 H1B visa applications, mostly in the information technology, finance, and engineering sectors.

In recent years, Indian nationals have accounted for more than 70 percent of H-1B approvals. It is widely used in industries such as information technology, finance, and engineering.

Applications for H-1B visas witnessed a decline from the highs of 2017



Note: H-1B cycle follows US govt fiscal year (Oct- Sept), Source: USCIS, MOFSL

> H-1B visa holders can leave and re-enter the country to the same extent as they normally would. Those who already hold H-1B visas and are currently outside of the country will not be charged to re-enter
>
> - **Karoline Leavitt,** White House Press Secretary

Indian firms may avoid H-1B filings

Indian IT services companies may steer clear of new H-1B filings from next fiscal year as these companies need to spend $1,00,000 per petition, said Motilal Oswal Financial Services, in its 'Technology' sector update released on Sunday. Page 10

Experts warn of deferred impact

The Indian IT industry breathed a lot easier on Sunday after the US government clarification. But some industry experts cautioned that there will be a deferred impact requiring eventual reassessment of business strategies by the IT companies. Page 4

K'taka bus fares set to rise every two years

Govt to form panel; periodic revisions to offset rising costs

BENGALURU, DHNS

Bus fares are set to be revised every two years as the state government has decided to form a Public Transport Fare Regulatory Committee (PTFRC) along the lines of the Karnataka Electricity Regulatory Commission (KERC).

The three-member committee, to be headed by a retired additional chief secretary or high court judge, will study the financial conditions of the state's four Road Transport Corporations (RTCs) and suggest periodic fare revisions, surcharges and fees.

The committee will have a three-year term.

It will meet at least once every three months and submit an annual report to the government and RTCs for tabling in the legislature between April 1 and December 31 every year.

Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy said fares would be revised every two years.

New panel for RTCs

MEMBERS

- A retd adl chief secy or HC judge (head)
- A retired principal secy/secy with legal qualifications
- An industry or financial expert
- KSRTC MD will be member-secy
- Three-year term

Daily expenses of RTCs

DIESEL

2014: Rs 7 crore

2025: Rs 13 crore

STAFF COST

2014: 6 crore

2025: Rs 12 crore

"We will revise the fares every two years, like how the KERC does with power tariffs. A small increase every two years will not burden the public much. Periodic revisions will help RTCs remain sustainable," the minister told *DH*.

Reddy noted that bus fares are often not revised due to political considerations. For instance, BMTC fares were revised in 2014 and then only in 2025.

To facilitate the fare regulatory committee's formation, the Transport Department has notified a draft to insert Chapter 5A in the Karnataka Motor Vehicle Rules, 1989.

▸ RTC, Page 2

With GST cuts set to roll out, PM talks of savings & swadeshi

GYANENDRA KESHRI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said the reduction in goods and services tax (GST) and income tax relief provided in this year's budget would result in savings of over Rs 2.5 lakh crore to the common people and help accelerate consumption and economic growth.

He also stressed the need for promoting made-in-India goods, saying "just as the mantra of swadeshi empowered India's freedom struggle, it will similarly energise the nation's journey toward prosperity".

In his address to the nation, hours before the roll out of the second generation of the indirect tax reform, Modi said reduced GST rates and simplified procedures would significantly benefit MSMEs, especially small-scale and cottage enterprises.

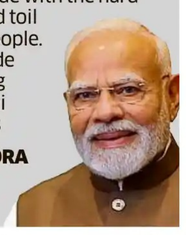
The GST rate cuts and reforms, which were approved by the GST Council on September 3, will come into effect from Monday, the beginning of the Navratri festival.

It will lead to a sharp drop in prices of a hosts of goods, from daily essentials like toilet soaps, shampoo and toothpaste to aspirational goods like cars and air conditioners.

"This reform is not only about reducing prices but also about creating new opportunities," Modi remarked, terming the exercise as Bachat Utsav (savings festival).

▸ GST, Page 2

> We should buy Made-in-India items that have been made with the hard work and toil of our people. Take pride in buying swadeshi products
>
> **NARENDRA MODI,** PM



Caste survey to kick off today, delayed in B'luru

BENGALURU, DHNS

The Social and Educational survey (caste census) will start across the state as planned on Monday, except in Bengaluru (Greater Bengaluru Authority limits), where the process has been postponed by a few days for administrative reasons.

The survey is scheduled from Sept 22 to Oct 07. However, a delay in the start date in GBA limits may extend the survey beyond Oct 7 in Bengaluru.

The survey may be delayed in Bengaluru by around 4-5 days. However, Backward Classes Commission chairman Madhusudan R Naik clarified during a presser that any such delay wouldn't affect schools.

"In Bengaluru, there are not many teachers who are enumerators. We are also utilising people from other departments. Thus, even if the survey extends by 2-3 days, it won't affect teaching."

According to sources, there are around 25,000 enumerators in Bengaluru, of which 4,000-5,000 are teachers.

In the state, there are around 1.61 lakh blocs, and roughly 2 lakh teachers and other employees will be utilised for the tasks. On Sept 8, the commission held training for state master trainers.

▸ Caste census, Page 2

Panel 'hides' 33 'Christian castes', Page 2

MINOR DELAY

- Survey in B'luru postponed by 4-5 days due to formation of GBA
- Delay in GBA limits may extend the survey beyond October 7
- There are around 25k enumerators in B'luru, of which 4,000-5,000 are teachers
- Backward Classes Commission chief says delay wouldn't affect schools

Mysuru all set for 11-day Dasara extravaganza

MYSURU, DHNS: Mysuru, the cultural capital of the state, is all set for 11-day Dasara festivities. Packed with 30 events at 20 venues, the festival is all set to wow visitors.

Booker Prize winner Banu Mushtaq will inaugurate Dasara atop Chamundi Hill on Monday by lighting lamp before the idol of Goddess Sri Chamundeshwari Devi.

The idol, which is usually kept at Gombe Thotti of Mysuru Palace, was taken to Chamundi Hill on September 16. It will be brought back to the palace on October 2 before the procession.

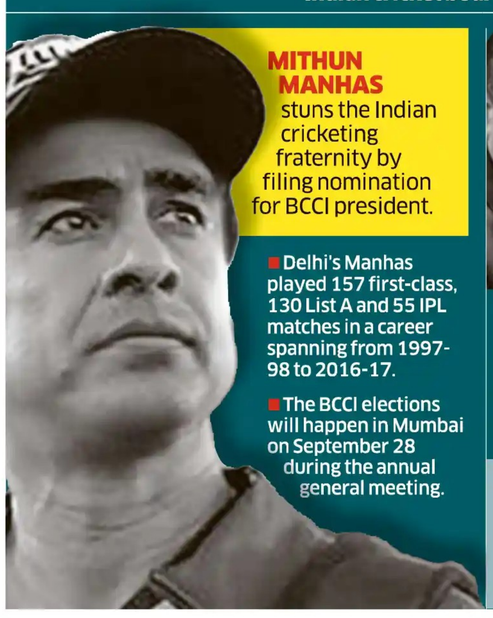
Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar will be present on the occasion.

The Dasara festivities will conclude with the spectacular 'jambu savari' procession on Vijayadashami on October 2.

Details on Page 3

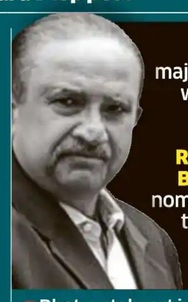
Big spin! Manhas set to become BCCI prez

Former Delhi batter lone candidate to file nomination for Indian cricket board's top post



MITHUN MANHAS stuns the Indian cricketing fraternity by filing nomination for BCCI president.

- Delhi's Manhas played 157 first-class, 130 List A and 55 IPL matches in a career spanning from 1997-98 to 2016-17.
- The BCCI elections will happen in Mumbai on September 28 during the annual general meeting.



Another major surprise was in store after KSCA president **RAGHURAM BHAT** filed a nomination for the treasurer's post.

- Bhat, a stalwart in Karnataka cricket, played 82 first-class matches, bagging 374 wickets.
- Bhat also played two Tests with his first international victim being Pakistan's Javed Miandad.
- Prabhtej Bhatia to replace Rohan Gauns Desai as the joint secretary and Jaydev Shah to take charge of the Apex Council from Dilip Vengsarkar.
- Current BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia filed his nomination to continue in the same role, and Arun Dhumal will remain as IPL governing council chairman.

Devajit Saikia

Arun Dhumal

UK, Australia & Canada recognise Palestinian state

LONDON, AFP: Britain, Australia and Canada on Sunday recognised a Palestinian state in a seismic shift in decades of western foreign policy.

Portugal was also to recognise Palestinian statehood later Sunday, as Israel came under huge international pressure over the war in Gaza.

"Today, to revive the hope of peace for the Palestinians and Israelis, and a two-state solution, the United Kingdom formally recognises the State of Palestine," UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer said on X.

Britain and Canada became the first G7 countries to take the step.

Details on Page 12

Garbage services now under ESMA

BENGALURU, DHNS: Days after workers involved in the collection of garbage threatened to go on an indefinite strike from September 24, the government has invoked the Essential Services Maintenance Act (ESMA) to declare a wide range of civic services in Bengaluru as "essential".

A notification, issued by the Urban Development Department on September 19, prohibits strikes or work refusals by employees of the GBA, BSWML and the five newly formed city corporations.

The notification states that employees cannot refuse work in these departments. The move comes at a time when the auto tipper drivers and loaders — who collect garbage — have announced a strike.

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FATAL ENIGMA

20 deaths this yr: Lurking amoeba keeps Kerala guessing

ARJUN RAGHUNATH
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM/KOZHIKODE, DHNS

A pathogen that lives true to its moniker — 'brain-eating' amoeba — has forced the health authorities in Kerala into a Sherlock Holmes-like pursuit these days. However, unlike the fictional detective, the officials are coming back empty-handed every time they go behind this microscopic villain.

The southern state has reported as many as 20 deaths and 70 infections this year so far due to primary amoebic meningoencephalitis (PAM), which is caused by Naegleria fowleri, infamously known as the 'brain-eating' amoeba.

According to health experts, the amoeba is found in water bodies like ponds, lakes and rivers. When the contaminated water enters a person's nose, the parasite can travel through nasal passages into the brain, causing inflammation and destruction of brain tissues.

The current enigma is: the authorities haven't found the fatal amoeba in the suspected waters yet.

Mystery continues

In Athiyanoor, on the outskirts of Thiruvananthapuram, a pond has kept the locals in the grip of fear after a 27-year-old youth, Akhil, died of PAM in July 2024.

Akhil's relatives stand near the pond, which is suspected to be the infection's source. DH PHOTO

Along with the victim, four of his friends had contracted the infection. Subsequent epidemiological studies pointed fingers at the pond — known as Kavinkulam — as the five youth had engaged in cleaning it.

However, the authorities couldn't find the amoeba despite repeatedly testing the pond's water.

"Even though health officials told us that the pond could be used, they are not completely ruling out the presence of the amoeba in it. This has caused fear in the village," says local ward member S Vishnu.

▸ Fatal disease, Page 2

Bus fares to rise every 2 yrs...

RTC, from Page 1

Objections or suggestions may be sent to the Transport Secretary (Room No 123, Ground Floor, MS Building, 3rd Gate, Bengaluru-560001) by October 8.

Of the committee's two members, one will be a retired principal secretary/secretary with legal qualifications and the other an industry or financial expert.

The managing director of the Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) will serve as the member-secretary, collating data from RTCs, being their voice in the committee and managing the members' administrative needs, including their pay and perks.

NGOs, public organisations and RTC unions may also make representations.

KSRTC MD Akram Pasha said the committee would factor in costs of diesel, spare parts, maintenance, bus purchase and salaries before recommending the fare hikes.

"Expenses keep increasing but the government doesn't allow us to hike fares. A periodic hike will set this right," he told this newspaper.

While the committee will do its own calculations before recommending the hike, sources indicated that the revision would be 2-3%, or up to 5%. After the final notification is published, the file will be sent to the transport secretary and the minister before being put up to the chief minister, who will nominate the members.

Pasha said the committee was likely to be in place by year-end, with offices likely at BMTC complex in Shanthinagar. The KSRTC said in a statement that without periodic fare adjustments, RTCs would face financial crises, weakening their ability to function sustainably.

Karnataka's four RTCs revised their fares by 15% in January 2025. Before that, BMTC had revised fares in 2014 and other RTCs in 2020. In 2014, the daily diesel expenditure was Rs 7 crore, which rose to Rs 13 crore by 2025. Similarly, daily staff costs have increased from Rs 6 crore in 2014 to Rs 12 crore in 2025.

Namma Metro, which revised its fares by an average of 51.55% in February 2025 after seven and a half years, will hike ticket prices by up to 5% every year, starting February 2026. The government has also announced a more periodic increase in auto fares.

Post backlash, panel 'hides' 33 'Christian castes' in list

BC commission chief says they didn't 'create' new castes

BENGALURU, DHNS

The Backward Classes Commission has decided to 'hide' the names of 33 Christian castes that have Hindu caste names as suffixes or prefixes in the enumerators' list, during the upcoming social and educational survey (caste census) beginning on Monday.

Backward Classes Commission chairman Madhusudan R Naik announced this at a press conference here on Sunday.

Among 38 communities related to Christians, 33 have been hidden, including Kuruba Christian, Ediga Christian, Madivala Christian, Vokkaliga Christian and Reddy (Raddy) Christian.

The remaining five classifications (Christian, Christian Protestant, Protestant Christian, Syrian Christian and Scheduled Caste converts to Christianity) have been retained as it is.

Though these castes will be "hidden" in the dropdown, the commission clarified that people can enumerate as any caste they wish, when asked if their caste/religion is known by any other name.

K A Dayananda, member secretary of the Backward Classes Commission, said that the current list of 1,561 castes (which includes the 33 'hidden' castes) was only for the clarity of the enumerators and not the final list of the commission.

He clarified that only 101 SC, 50 ST and 887 other castes were in the official list, and that all other castes were merely for the enumerators' convenience.

"Steps have been taken to resolve unnecessary controversies. The commission has not created any castes. These were there during the previous years and we have provided them in the drop-down for the convenience of the surveyors to identify castes easily. This is only for the internal usage of the surveyors. It's not a public document and has no legal sanctity," a press note by the commission said.

The note said that after the survey is over, the commission will analyse the data collected and then submit its report to the government, on the facilities to be provided to different communities. However, Dayananda and Naik clarified that those who had converted will be categorised under the new religion itself.

The decision to "hide" these categories came after the Cabinet was divided on the issue on Thursday, following which some ministers, including Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar, met members of the backward classes commission and spoke to them on these issues.

With GST cuts set to roll out...

GST, from Page 1

"The savings of our middle class will increase, our youth will benefit, and the entire economy will gain momentum."

Making a strong pitch for backing made-in-India goods, Modi said: "Many foreign items have unknowingly become part of daily life, and citizens often do not even realise whether the comb in their pocket is foreign or indigenous." "We should buy Made-in-India items that have been made with the hard work and toil of our people. Take pride in buying Swadeshi products," he added. Opposition parties criticised Modi for taking full credit for the GST rate cuts.

"We are losing Rs 20,000 crore as revenue, but we are happy about the lowering of GST. But why are you (Modi) claiming credit for it? We had sought a lowered GST. It was our suggestion at the GST Council meeting with the Union Finance Minister," said West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee.

Terming the GST reform a 'band aid' Congress Party President Malikarjun Kharge said the government collected over Rs 55 lakh crore in eight years through nine GST slabs.

"Now, by talking about a Rs 2.5 lakh crore savings festival, you are trying to put a small Band-Aid on the deep wounds inflicted on the public," Kharge wrote on X.

India Inc has welcomed the GST reforms, saying it would help accelerate economic growth.

Aland 'vote theft': ECI blatantly lying, says Priyank

BENGALURU, DHNS

Karnataka Minister for Rural Development and Panchayat Raj (RDPR) Priyank Kharge on Sunday accused the Election Commission of India (ECI) of 'blatantly lying' about applications to delete 6,000-odd voters from the electoral rolls in Aland Assembly constituency during the 2023 Assembly election.

In a post on 'X', Priyank shared the copy of a letter by the ECI dated September 19, 2025, wherein it was claimed that the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) for Karnataka, had handed over 'all available information with the commission to the Superintendent of Police, Kalaburgi district, on September 06, 2023.' The letter had added: "The CEO, Karnataka has been providing continuous assistance, and will share further information and documents, to the investigation agency."

Priyank Kharge

Refutes claims

Refuting the commission's claims, Priyank shared the copy of a letter from the Deputy SP to the CEO dated February 25, 2025, along with the copy of another letter dated March 14, 2025, from the CEO to the Principal Secretary, ECI.

Slamming the ECI, Priyank wrote, "The Office of the CEO, Karnataka had sent a reminder to you on March 14, 2025, seeking information on: 'Was OTP/Multifactor authentication facility adopted in NVSP & VHA apps, platforms, was OTP/authentication facility extended for uploading the applications. If so, provide details, If authentication like OTP exists, whether the OTP will be sent to the Mobile No used for login or Mobile Number provided in the form by the applicant or both?' Despite multiple reminders, you have been playing dumb and lying to the public about having furnished all details to the investigation agencies."

All cities have potholes, why target B'luru?: Shivakumar

It's a conspiracy against Cong-ruled state, says DKS

NEW DELHI, DHNS

Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar on Sunday said that some vested interests were conspiring against the Congress government in Karnataka by raking up potholes on Bengaluru roads.

"There are potholes on roads in every part of the country. Even in front of my house at Safdarjung Enclave in Delhi, there are 50 potholes on a 100-metre road. In Mumbai or any other city in the country, there are potholes. Why are potholes in Bengaluru being highlighted? It is because the media highlighted this. It is nothing but a conspiracy against the Congress-ruled state," Shivakumar told reporters here.

Shivakumar

'Seek funds from Centre'

To a question on industrialists attacking the state government for not upkeeping Bengaluru roads, he said, "I am appealing to all industrialists who have raised the potholes issue to speak to the union government. Please ask the Centre how much money they have given to Bengaluru, despite Karnataka being second highest in the country to contribute in terms of tax".

During the Congress-led UPA government at the Centre, there was a programme called Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission, to improve infrastructure in urban areas.

Under that, Karnataka used to get crores of rupees to improve infrastructure. Why was the programme stopped by the BJP government, Shivakumar, who also holds the Bengaluru development portfolio, asked.

"We have developed a a mobile application to alert the government about potholes on every road in Bengaluru. I have given a deadline to fill potholes. The chief minister has also sanctioned additional funds for this purpose. We have sufficient funds, we know the value of Bengaluru. We will improve all roads," he said.

On Andhra Pradesh's IT Minister Nara Lokesh requesting Bengaluru-based companies to relocate to Andhra Pradesh, Shivakumar said, "Andhra Pradesh is also part of India. I wish best of luck to Nara Lokesh. I don't want to comment on this. He is free to express his views".

◆ WEATHER ◆

Overview: Rainfall occurred at most places over Coastal Karnataka & at a few places Interior Karnataka.
Forecast Sep 22: Generally cloudy sky. Light to moderate rain likely.

INTERIOR NORTH

Stations	Max	Min	Rain
Belagavi	27.2	19.4	0.0
Bidar	30.4	21.0	83.8
Vijayapura	30.5	21.5	0.0
Dharwad	28.0	NA	0.0
Haveri	25.4	21.2	0.0
Kalaburagi	33.3	21.8	47.3
Raichur	31.2	23.0	8.0
COASTAL			
Honnavar	30.0	24.0	0.5
Karwar	32.0	24.4	3.5
Shirali	NA	NA	NA
Mangaluru	29.4	23.5	6.8

INTERIOR SOUTH

Stations	Max	Min	Rain
Agumbe	NA	NA	2.0
Bengaluru	27.6	20.8	0.0
Ballari	NA	NA	NA
Chamarajanagar	29.3	19.9	0.0
Chikkamagaluru	NA	NA	NA
Chitradurga	28.6	20.6	0.0
Davangere	29.0	20.5	0.0
Hassan	29.2	18.5	3.5
Mysuru	30.0	19.0	3.0
Madikeri	--	--	--
Kolar	27.8	19.6	0.0
OTHER STATIONS			
New Delhi	37.0	27.0	NIL
Kolkata	31.0	27.0	NIL
Mumbai	28.0	27.0	NA
Chennai	32.0	27.0	NA
Pune	27.0	23.0	NA
Hyderabad	28.0	24.0	NA
Th'puram	33.0	25.0	NIL

20 deaths this year: Fatal amoeba keeps Kerala guessing

Fatal disease, from Page 1

The amoeba raised its fatal head last month, almost 300 km from Thiruvananthapuram. An eight-year-old girl, Ananya, and a three-month-old baby were among the initial victims.

Though Ananya's two siblings were also tested positive for the infection, both of them recovered.

"Why is that my daughter died all of a sudden whereas all others who died due to the infection were under treatment for at least a week or more. There was a serious delay on the part of the government taluk hospital in shifting her to the medical college," says Ayana's father, Sanoop. Water samples collected from the nearby pond where the children had taken a bath as well as the pipe water at their house were found to be having only the usual Balamuthia variant of the amoeba.

"Since the Balamuthia variant was present, we assume that Naegleria was also present," a health official said, admitting that the presence of Naegleria could not be conclusively proved.

Now, a blame game has erupted as the ward member of the locality where the pond is located belongs to the ruling front, whereas the pipe water supply was initiated by a member of an Opposition party.

Meanwhile, the family of the deceased infant in Omassery, also in the suburbs of Kozhikode, has no clue how the infant contracted the disease. "How did our child who did not go swimming or took a shower get the infection?" a family member asked.

Need for more steps

It was in 2016 that the first case of amoebic meningoencephalitis was reported in Kerala when a child died in Alappuzha. Till 2023, total cases reported in the state were eight. In 2024, there was a spike, with 36 cases being reported and nine of them fatal.

"A detailed analysis of each case of infection needs to be carried out to find the environmental conditions in which the amoeba grows. EIt is high time that Kerala initiates in depth epidemiology studies as rare diseases like NIPAH and PAM are being reported again and again in Kerala," said senior virologist T Jacob John.

DEPARTMENT OF MINORITY WELFARE
Directorate of Minorities
No.16C, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Bhavan,
Miller Tank Bund Road, Vasanthnagar, Bengaluru - 52.
Website: https://dom.karnataka.gov.in

Muslim, Christian, Jain, Buddhist, Sikh, Parsi

ANNOUNCEMENT OF RESIDENTIAL PRE-EXAMINATION POLICE CONSTABLE TRAINING FOR THE YEAR 2025-26

Online Application

- Applications are invited for giving pre-examination Police Constable training for the students belonging to religious minority community for the year 2025-26.

Timeline

Date for submission of Online applications starts from: 22.09.2025.
Last date for submission of online applications: 03.10.2025.

Eligibility

- Students must be residence of Karnataka State.
- Students must be belonging to religious minority community (Muslim, Christian, Jain, Buddhist, Sikh and Parsi).
- Students must be passed in II PUC/Equivalent Exam.
- **Age limit:** Students Must have completed 18 years and below 27 years (As on the last date of application).
- Candidates working in Government Sector (Central/State) are not eligible.

Instructions for Applicants

- Applicants are advised to download the application form available on the website of the Directorate of Minorities at https://dom.karnataka.gov.in and submit the application as per the guidelines.
- For more details contact your concerned District Minority Officer, Minority Welfare Department and also contact Helpline Number:8277799990.

Date: 22.09.2025
Place: Bengaluru

Sd/-
Director
Directorate of Minorities,
Bengaluru

DIPR/CP/2923/2025-26

Belur tense after 'desecration' of Ganesha idol

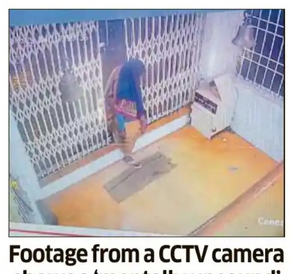
BELUR (HASSAN DIST), DHNS:

Tension prevailed after a 'mentally unsound' woman allegedly placed footwear on the idol of Lord Ganesha at Vidya Ganapathi Temple here on Sunday.

Security has been beefed up in the town. The Vidya Ganapathi temple is on the premises of the Town Municipal Council (TMC) office. It is a practice for vendors to offer prayers here in the morning daily.

On Sunday, when they went to the temple, they were shocked to find the idol desecrated with the footwear.

Police have taken a woman, identified as Leelamma of Vijayanagar Layout in Hassan, into custody after initiating a probe based on CCTV footage.


Footage from a CCTV camera shows a 'mentally unsound' woman entering the temple.

"It is suspected that the woman is mentally unsound. A detailed probe is on," said Superintendent of Police Mohammed Sujitha.

The footage shows a woman entering the temple, with footwear on. There was no footwear when she came out.

The slippers on the idol and the one she was wearing looked similar. Hence, police suspect that she might have done this. The inquiry is being conducted in Hassan and eight teams have been constituted for this, the SP added.

Locals staged a flash protest near the TMC, demanding stern action against miscreants trying to disturb peace and harmony in the town.

Caste survey to kick off today...

Caste census, from Page 1

These trainers will train district-level trainers, who will in turn train the enumerators. According to GBA sources, training camps will be held Monday onwards for the trainers, who will further train the enumerators.

"We are going to train 25,000 enumerators and are waiting for the date from the commission to start the survey in Bengaluru," said Munish Moudgil, special commissioner, revenue, GBA.

According to KA Dayananda, Member Secretary of the Backward Classes Commission, the delay in Bengaluru is due to the changes resulting from the formation of the GBA and the rearrangement of officers. Even in previous surveys, including the one conducted by the Kantharaj Commission in 2015, and the recently concluded HN Nagamohan Das Commission survey of Scheduled Castes (SCs), the enumeration in Bengaluru was lukewarm, and lesser than the corresponding percentage in other districts.

Speaking about the earlier surveys, Dayananda said: "During the Nagamohan Das survey, a polling station was considered a block. One polling station in Bengaluru will have around 2,000 voters (around 400-500 houses). However, we have now considered 150 houses as a block. Also, we have introduced geo-tagging. Thus, supervisors can go and verify in those places."

Slot booking in B'luru

The member secretary pointed out that people across the state can register in three ways: online registration, door-to-door survey, and registering by calling enumerators through numbers given on stickers, which are pasted on all houses where enumeration hasn't been carried out.

He said a fourth method will be used in Bengaluru.

"In BBMP (GBA), they are planning slot booking. There will be an extra team in the control room. When slots are booked, they will go to the houses and collect them."

Mysuru beckons to mesmerise; 11-day Nada Habba gets going today

Legacy of lights, touch of tradition & immersive cultural pot-pourri

It's a fairy tale feel out there as Mysuru decks up for Dasara. A view of the palace captured on camera from atop Chamundi hill.
DH PHOTO/ANUP RAGH T

SHILPA P
MYSURU, DHNS

The state's cultural capital is all set for the 11-day Naada Habba from Monday. Packed with 30 events at 20 venues before the grand finale, Dasara has something for everyone.

International Booker Prize winner Banu Mushtaq will inaugurate Dasara atop Chamundi Hill between 10.10 am and 10.40 am at the auspicious Vrishchika lagna by lighting the lamp in front of the idol of Goddess Chamundeshwari seated in a silver mantapa at the temple.

It is the same idol that will be placed in the golden howdah to be carried by Dasara elephant Abhimanyu during Jamboo Savari on October 2.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah will join Banu in doing the honours, along with Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar, Mysuru district incharge Minister H C Mahadevappa and others.

The CM will launch cultural programmes, which will be held between 5 pm and 10 pm for eight days in front of the palace and nine days at nine other venues. He will inaugurate them in front of the illuminated palace with Kannada and Culture Minister Shivaraj Tangadagi at 5 pm. The Asthana Vidwan award will be presented to Hindustani classical vocalist Pandit M Venkatesh Kumar on the occasion.

The CM, along with international woman wrestler Vinesh Phogat, will open the state Dasara CM cup sports meet at Chamundi Vihar stadium.

Energy Minister K J George will kickstart the 21-day Dasara illumination by switching on lights of 'Hasiru Chappara' on Sayyaji Rao Road. As many as 136 km of roads, 118 circles and public places are illuminated with LED lights, 80 varieties of insignia at Rs 7 crore, utilising 2,57,520 units of power.

Also lined up are Yuva Dasara, air show, drone show, poets' meet, Yoga Dasara, women's Dasara, children's Dasara, farmers' Dasara, flower show, food mela, book mela, Dasara wrestling, etc.

Shashishekar Dixith, chief priest of Chamundeshwari temple, readies the idol of the deity on Sunday, for inauguration of Dasara on Monday.

Royal family raring to go for festivities

MYSURU, DHNS

The erstwhile royal family is all set for the Sharannavaratri festivities at the palace.

On Monday, between 5.30 am to 5.45 am, an image of 'Simha' (face of lion) will be fixed to the golden throne. Between 9.55 am and 10.15 am, there will be 'Kankana Dharana' for scion of the erstwhile royal family Yaduveer Krishnadatta Chamaraja Wadiyar and his wife Trishika Devi. Wadiyar is also the Mysuru-Kodagu MP.

He will perform various pujas between 12.42 pm and 12.58 pm at Ambavilas durbar hall. He will then ascend the throne and hold Khasagi durbar.

Wadiyar will hold prvate durbar for 15 minutes at around 7 pm for 10 days, starting Monday. Members of the public are not being allowed to watch the spectacle since 2020, after Covid pandemic.

On September 29, between 10.10 am and 10.30 am, Wadiyar will perform Saraswathi puja at Kannadi Thotti.

DCF I B Prabhu Gowda said Dasara elephant Srikanta will participate as Pattada Aane and Ekalavya as Nishaane Aane for the private Dasara.

'Poor' roads: BJP plans statewide protest on Sept 24

SHIVAMOGGA, PTI: BJP will stage 'rasta roko' (Road blockade) on September 24, in all 224 Assembly constituencies in Karnataka, protesting against the condition of the roads in the state, party President B Y Vijayendra said on Sunday. "People are upset with the state of roads. We will hold 'Rasta Roko' for one hour from 11 am," he said.

Trust expels Jayamrutyunjaya Swami from Kudalasangama Panchamasali Peeth

KUDALASANGAMA (BAGALKOT DIST), DHNS

The Akhila Bharata Lingayat Panchamasali Trust, in its executive body meeting on Sunday, has resolved to remove Basava Jayamrutyunjaya Swami from Kudalasangama Panchamasali Peeth.

Basava Jayamrutyunjaya Swami.

In a press meet after the meeting at the Kudalasangama Lingayat Panchamasali Peeth, Neelkanth Asuti, the general secretary of the Trust, said, "Basava Jayamrutyunjaya Swami has violated the rules and guidelines of the Trust. Without taking the consent of the Trust, he (the seer) had convened a meeting in Hubballi on September 17 during which he he suggested the Panchamasalis to identify as Hindus in religion column and specify Lingayat as caste and Panchamasali sub-caste in socio-education survey. This is against the decision of the Trust, which runs on Basava Tatva (ideology). He is acting like an agent of a political party. Hence, the Trust resolved to expel Basava Jayamrutyunjaya Swami from the Panchamasali Peeth, Asuti told reporters.

Vijayananda Kashappanavar, Congress MLA and president of the Trust, said, "Basava Jayamrutyunjaya Swami is no longer the head of the Kudalasangama Panchamasali Peeth. The seer was misleading the community. He was trying to supress the 2A reservation movement at the behest of a particular political party by asking the community members to mark as Hindus in religion column and Lingayat in caste column. If Panchamasalis follow it, we won't get 2A reservation."

"The Trust will convene a meeting of the community and after consulting the members will decide on the next head of the Peeth. The community is much bigger than an individual. The seer (Basava Jayamrutyunjaya Swami) has houses in Belagavi and Bengaluru and has amassed wealth through a separate Trust. I am ready to release the CD of the seer, if need be. Let Basanagouda Patil Yatnal and C C Patil open a separate mutt wth Basava Jayamrutyunjaya Swami. We have the capacity to build the Peeth," Kashappanavar said.

KSRTC announces special buses and package tours for Dasara

BENGALURU, DHNS

In view of the upcoming Dasara holidays, the Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) has announced extra buses to Mysuru and other cities in Karnataka.

The KSRTC will operate 610 special buses for tourists called the Mysuru Dasara Special Buses. Of these, 260 buses will leave from Bengaluru (Mysuru Road Satellite Bus Station) to Mysuru, and 350 buses from Mysuru to nearby tourist and pilgrim sites like Chamundi Hills, KRS Dam/Brindavan Gardens, Srirangapatna, Nanjanagud, Madikeri, Mandya, Malavalli, HD Kote, Chamarajanagar, Hunsur, KR Nagar, Gundlupet, etc.

The KSRTC is also operating "Fly Bus" air-conditioned buses from Bengaluru's Kempegowda International Airport to Mysuru.

Over 2,300 special buses will operate from Bengaluru (Kempegowda Bus Station, Mysuru Road Bus Station and Shanthinagar BMTC Bus Station) to various cities in Karnataka and other states on September 26, 27 and 30. Return services will run from October 2–5.

These special buses will operate to Dharmasthala, Kukke Subramanya, Sringeri, Horanadu, Shivamogga, Madikeri, Mangaluru, Davanagere, Gokarna, Kollur, Hubballi-Dharwad, Belagavi, Vijayapura, Karwar, Ballari, Hosapete, Kalaburagi, Raichur and other places in the state and to Hyderabad, Chennai, Ooty, Kodaikanal, Salem, Thiruchinapalli, Pudukottai, Madurai, Panaji, Shirdi, Pune, Ernakulam and Palakkad in other states.

The KSRTC also announced the following one-day special package tours by Karnataka Sarige buses for tourists coming to Mysuru from September 27 to October 7.

Giridarshini
Bandipur, Gopalaswamy Hills, BR Hills, Nanjangud and Chamundi Hills. Fare will be Rs 450 for adults and Rs 300 for children.

Jaladarshini
Golden Temple (Bylakuppe), Dubare, Nisargadhama, Raja's Seat, Harangi Reservoir and KRS. The fare will is Rs 500 for adults and Rs 350 for children.

Devadarshini
Nanjangud, Bluff, Mudukuthore, Talkad, Somanathapura and Srirangapatna. The fare is Rs 330 for adults and Rs 225 for children.

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Smt. Banu Mushtaq, Author and winner of
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Fresh summons to Malaysian telecom firm in Aircel-Maxis case

NEW DELHI, PTI: A special court here has issued fresh summons to Malaysian telecom giant Maxis and its former director Augustus Ralph Marshall on a CBI request in connection with FIPB clearance granted to its subsidiary during the tenure of former finance minister P Chidambaram for the takeover of Aircel in 2006, officials said.

The agency has also requested the issuance of a summons to the Malaysian company Astro All Asia Network in connection with the case, which has been cleared by the special court, they said.

The CBI has sought three months from the court to serve the summons in Malaysia, they said.

The probe agency had filed its first chargesheet against former telecom minister Dayanidhi Maran and some others on August 29, 2014, after which the special court had issued summonses a number of times to the Malaysia-based accused, but in spite of efforts of the Indian High Commission and the Ministry of Home Affairs, they were not served.

The case pertains to alleged corruption in Foreign Investment Promotion Board clearance granted to Global Communication Services Holdings Limited, a 100% subsidiary of Maxis based in Mauritius, in 2006 when Chidambaram was the Union finance minister.

Puja politics peaks in Bengal as TMC & BJP trade barbs

Saffron party accuses CM Mamata of 'sabotaging' Hindu rituals

ANIRBAN BHAUMIK
KOLKATA, DHNS

People pull a cart with the idol of Goddess Durga ahead of the 'Durga Puja' festival at Kumartuli, in Kolkata, on Sunday. PTI

With the West Bengal Assembly elections just a few months away, the ruling Trinamool Congress and its principal challenger, the BJP, have not spared even the Durga Puja festival from their war of words.

TMC chief and the state's Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee inaugurated several Durga Puja pandals on Saturday and Sunday. As "Mahalaya" ushered in the festive fortnight on Sunday, she released a song penned by her and sung by state minister Indranil Sen, an eminent singer and film producer. She did not miss the opportunity to take political swipes. Soon after Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the nation on GST reforms on Sunday, she accused the Central government of taking undue credit for lowering taxes.

"We are losing Rs 20,000 crore revenue, but are happy about the lowering of GST. But why are you claiming credit for it? We had sought a lower GST. It was our suggestion at the GST Council meeting," she said after drawing the third eye of the goddess' idol at the pandal of Chetla Agrani, one of Kolkata's most prominent Durga Puja committees.

She reiterated her allegations against governments of BJP-ruled states of harassing Bengali-speaking migrants from her state. "If I speak in Bengali, that is illegal, and if I speak in another language, that is legal. How can you say so? Why should migrants be thrown out, being labelled Bangladeshis?" she asked.

She drew flak from state BJP heavyweight and the Leader of the Opposition Suvendu Adhikari for inaugurating some pandals on Saturday, even before the end of Pitru Paksha, when, according to him, any new beginning should be avoided. "This is not ignorance; this is calculated malice," said Adhikari, accusing Mamata of "deliberately sabotaging" Hindu rituals. He also slammed the TMC government for West Bengal's lack of employment opportunities, highlighting on X the plight of migrant workers who had to leave the state in search of livelihood and would not be able to return home for the festival.

Mamata raised the government aid for each of the state's 40,000-odd Durga Puja organisers from Rs 85,000 in 2024 to Rs 1.1 lakh this year. TMC MLA Sukumar Dey recently said that if the organisers accepted government aid, they should put up pictures of the CM and the state government's development works in pandals.

"The government is spending public money to provide aid to the Durga Puja organisers, not donating money from anyone's personal coffers," said Adhikari, slamming Dey.

H-1B clarification calms nerves in tech circles—for now

NEW DELHI, PTI

The Indian IT industry breathed a lot easier on Sunday after the US government clarified that the H-1B visa application fee hike applies only to new applicants and does not affect the existing visa holders or renewals.

While some industry experts noted that they foresee no immediate adverse impact over the next 6-12 months as the hike takes effect only in the upcoming application cycle, others cautioned that the delay notwithstanding, there will be a deferred impact requiring eventual reassessment of business strategies by the IT companies, if the rule stays.

"For the next six months to one year, there'll be no impact because for last year, they (companies) already filed H-1B petitions and the lottery system will operate.

"It's only for a petition filed for now... If you file a new petition, it takes six months to one year for it to come up," former Infosys CFO and industry veteran Mohandas Pai said.

He added: "So, there's no worry for the next six months to one year, and after that we will see what happens."

Sajai Singh, Partner at JSA Advocates and Solicitors, however, emphasised that while the immediate shock has muted slightly, which seems like a huge relief for now, it is just giving more time for the reality to set in.

"The clarifications tweak the applicability for new H-1B visa applicants, not the existing visa holders or renewals. This means the current H-1B holders can exit and re-enter the US freely without paying the fee, as the fee will apply to the upcoming H-1B lottery cycle.

"However, Indian IT companies that rely heavily on H-1B visas will still face significant cost increases, potentially disrupting business models and revenue streams," Singh said.

Eventually, all this will bring the focus back on hiring local talent in the US to reduce the dependence on H-1B visa holders, Singh said.

"Net-net, there may be a slight delay in the impact. But the impact will be there, requiring reassessment of business strategies. Yes, the immediate shock has slightly diluted, and so it seems like a huge relief. It's just giving more time for the reality to set in," Singh added.

Ganesh Natarajan, Chairman, GTT Data Solutions Ltd and 5F World, said that after the clarifications, it is good that the existing visa holders will not be affected.

The "American Dream" for an aspiring student or first timer, however, will no longer be feasible, he noted.

"Companies in future will restrict cross-border travel and more work will be done through GCCs in countries like India, Mexico and Philippines where talent will be available," he said.

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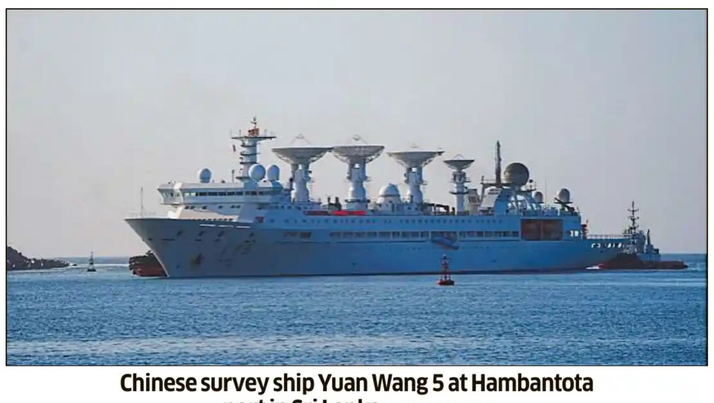
China's spy ship returns to Indian Ocean amid missile test buzz

India tracks Yuan Wang 5; NOTAM restricts Bay of Bengal airspace

NEW DELHI, DHNS



Chinese survey ship Yuan Wang 5 at Hambantota port in Sri Lanka. REUTERS FILE

China's spy ship Yuan Wang 5 has returned to India's maritime neighbourhood, three years after it docked at Sri Lanka's Hambantota Port.

New Delhi is closely monitoring the vessel's movement, as the state-of-the-art satellite and missile tracking ship of the Chinese People's Liberation Army Navy re-enters the Indian Ocean region amid speculation that India may test a hypersonic long-range anti-ship missile over the Bay of Bengal between September 24 and 25.

The Yuan Wang 5 was last reported near Indonesia around September 18.

New Delhi has issued a NOTAM restricting airspace over the Bay of Bengal between September 24 and 25, fuelling speculation about an impending missile test by India.

The movement of the Chinese PLA Navy's vessel in the Indian Ocean region around the same time has raised concerns in New Delhi, as its dual-use tracking capabilities could potentially be used for snooping, sources told *DH*.

The Yuan Wang 5 is equipped with multiple high-accuracy, long-range amplitude-comparison monopulse radar systems, capable of manually or automatically acquiring and tracking objects in flight or orbit. It has a crew of over 400 personnel and is among the vessels used by the Strategic Support Force of the Chinese PLA Navy to monitor satellites and intercontinental ballistic missiles.

Since entering service in September 2007, the spy ship has undertaken more than 80 tasks, including tracking China's crewed spacecraft Shenzhou, the Chang'e lunar exploration missions and Bei-Dou satellites. In 2022, it underwent a technical upgrade to enhance the navigation power, safety performance, reliability and operability of its "specialised equipment".

The Yuan Wang 5 arrived at Sri Lanka's Hambantota Port in August 2022, which was leased to a Chinese state-owned company in 2016. Colombo granted the vessel permission to dock for about a week, despite India conveying its security concerns to Lanka.

No language will be imposed on any state: Union minister

CHENNAI, PTI: Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan on Sunday said the Centre was not imposing any language on anybody.

He termed those who claim that the Centre imposes the three-language policy on states as "politically motivated".

Dharmendra Pradhan

"We are not imposing any language on anybody. For Classes 1 and 2, there will be a two-language formula. One will be the mother tongue. Here, it will be the Tamil language. The Union government's condition is that you have to teach in Tamil in primary school. You can teach another language; that is your choice," he said.

Elaborating on the three-language policy, he said that from Class 6 to 10, there is a three-language formula. "One language will be the mother tongue. The other two will be your choice. No language will be imposed by the government of India on any state," he said.

To a query about how the three-language policy is being implemented in a state like Uttar Pradesh, he said, "We are implementing it in that state also. Many state governments, forget BJP-ruled states, are implementing a three-language policy before the National Education Policy."

"In UP, a student will learn Hindi as the mother tongue. After that, they may opt for learning Marathi and Tamil also. Some students in UP can take Tamil as a third language. The UP government has to provide the facility to teach Tamil," he said.

Pointing out that only 10% of India's population speaks English, he said the rest of the population prefers to speak in their mother tongue.

Skill-based learning

He also said the government is considering adding skill-based learning to be incorporated in the curriculum of Class 11 and 12 as per the recommendations of the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP). Pradhan said there has to be a paradigm shift in learning methodology at the appropriate level, and the NEP was recommending it.

Maha wetlands score poorly; only 18 of 23k get health cards

MRITYUNJAY BOSE
MUMBAI, DHNS

Maharashtra has recorded official health cards for only 18 of its 23,046 major wetlands, leaving the state dangerously behind its peers, environmentalists said, quoting official data.

According to the latest data on the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change's (MoEFCC) Indian Wetlands portal, Madhya Pradesh leads the nation with 94 wetland health cards, followed by Odisha (77), Bihar and Tamil Nadu (71 each), Uttar Pradesh (58), Delhi NCR (56) and Jharkhand (43).

Nationally, the gap is stark: of more than 2,00,000 wetlands larger than 2.25 hectares identified by Isro's National Wetland Inventory Atlas in 2010, only 684 have health cards in the public domain.

"This reflects the poor status of wetland conservation across India," said B N Kumar, the director of the environmental watchdog NatConnect Foundation, calling the situation "highly regrettable" when the Centre speaks of preserving these ecosystems.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has described India's waterbodies as Amrit Dharohar—precious heritage—yet the numbers tell a different story.

A wetland health card typically lists details of hydrology and catchment, biodiversity, and governance, such as mapping, management plans, and notification.

Wetlands act as natural flood buffers, groundwater recharge zones, carbon sinks and biodiversity havens, yet urban planners treat them as "wastelands" for development, Kumar lamented.

The MoEFCC portal shows only 1,309 wetlands listed nationwide, including 91 internationally recognised Ramsar sites, compared to the NWIA list of over 2,00,000 major wetlands.

Physical verification

Maharashtra's shortfall stems from an incomplete ground-truthing exercise—the physical verification of wetlands with latitude and longitude coordinates—assigned to the National Centre for Sustainable Coastal Management (NCSCM). Without ground-truthing, wetlands cannot be formally notified for protection. Documentation remains in progress, according to information obtained by NatConnect through a Right to Information Act (RTI).

The updated state wetlands map by NCSCM shows hundreds of sites marked and coded, and this reference point is clearer than the NWIA on a 1:50,000 scale, Kumar said, and remarked that the documentation and notification remain a far cry.

GENDER IMBALANCE

Only 18 Muslim women elected to Lok Sabha since 1952

SHEMIN JOY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Around 7,500 people have been elected to the Lok Sabha since the first general elections in 1951-52, but only 18 were Muslim women; 30 states and Union Territories have never sent a woman from the minority community to the Lower House, a new book has said.

The book, "Missing from the House: Muslim Women in the Lok Sabha", found it "surprising" that none of the five southern states — known for better political representation and socio-economic indicators like literacy than the North — have not yet sent a Muslim woman to the Lok Sabha.

Authored by journalist Rasheed Kidwai and political scientist Ambar Kumar Ghosh, the book has said only 0.6% Lok Sabha members in the past 74 years were Muslim women.

Uttar Pradesh sent the highest number of Muslim women to the Lok Sabha, who served nine terms from five seats. West Bengal sent four women from four seats, who served five terms.

Assam, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, and Jammu and Kashmir were the only other states that sent Muslim women to the Lok Sabha.

"It is a shockingly abysmal figure, considering Muslim women are about 7.1% of India's 146 crore population. Out of the 18 Lok Sabhas constituted till 2025, five did not have a single Muslim woman. Equally shocking is the fact that the number of women elected to Parliament in one tenure never crossed four in the 543-seat Lower House," it said.

There were no Muslim women in the first (1952-57), fourth (1967-71), fifth (1971-77), ninth (1989-91), and 10th (1991-96) Lok Sabhas.

The first Muslim women elected to the Lok Sabha were Mofida Ahmad from Assam's Jorhat and Maimoona Sultan, who served two consecutive terms, from Bhopal in 1957, eventually followed by Mohsina Kidwai, Mehbooba Mufti, and current MP Iqra Hasan.

Dynasty factor

The book, which provides a brief sketch of these 18 MPs, also says 13 of them "came from dynastic backgrounds".

"Dynasty has, in fact, been closely linked to women's representation in the Indian Parliament. This made us wonder if, in the absence of dynastic culture in Indian electoral politics, the representation of women in general and Muslim women in particular might have been more negligible," wrote Kidwai and Ghosh.

Very few could serve as long-term MPs or become ministers, revealing the difficulty that even these "politically successful" women confronted, said the book, while insisting that it was "not a reflection of their lack of political grit or appetite".

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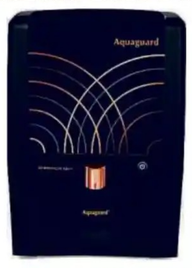

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Trump's H-1B directive and India's dilemma

All good things must come to an end—and the American Dream is no exception. On September 19, United States President Donald Trump issued a directive requiring employers to pay $100,000 (close to Rs 90 lakh) for every worker coming in on an H-1B visa. Although current visa holders are exempt and it is a one-time fee, the move signals Trump's intent to push back against Indian workers coming into the US. This foretells further measures that may raise barriers for new arrivals, and create conditions that may compel immigrants to leave. The humanitarian fallout of this is the first of many concerns that should be addressed. Second, this will disrupt the flow of talent to top US and Indian tech companies. Third, this protectionist move could destabilise the innovation landscape and push India closer to China for technology partnerships.

Even if the US courts strike it down, as some speculate, Trump is likely to pursue other ways to achieve his objectives of generating revenue by disproportionately impacting Indian employees and companies, and further discouraging immigration. It is the US' tried and tested strategy to be unpredictable, and act as if it is running amok. This achieves policy goals quickly, before those affected can grasp the full implications. Adding to this is Trump's rhetoric of calling leaders like Prime Minister Narendra Modi his 'friend', only to be followed up by his aides amplifying that the US 'holds its friends to higher standards'; which actually means holding their feet to the fire. Meanwhile, Trump-aligned US media builds up anti-immigrant sentiment, fanning public hostility. The overt display of cultural and religious identity by some Indian communities has not necessarily endeared them to the broader population. Immigrants need to strike a fine balance between upholding cultural identity and embracing integration.

Repeated policy shocks from Washington demand a firmer response from New Delhi

It is time India resisted these repeated blows to its interests by the Trump administration. Every sign of bonhomie is followed by a 'surgical strike': 50% tariffs on Indian exports; India named among major drug transit or illicit drug-producing countries, alongside sanctions and scrapping visas of corporate leaders and executives; revoking sanctions waiver for Iran's Chabahar port; and, now, a $100,000 H-1B visa fee. As External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar is likely to meet US Secretary of State Marco Rubio on the sidelines of the UNGA, New Delhi must move beyond the usual rhetoric of 'talking tough' on terrorism. Modi must break his 'strategic silence' on US policies that hurt India and its diaspora. Besides, to effectively engage with the Trump administration, India needs interlocutors who are less enamoured with the US. Otherwise, it will remain all talk, and no meaningful outcome.

Rise above politics, fix Bengaluru's roads

Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar's announcement of a Rs 1,100 crore allocation for road repairs in Bengaluru should have brought relief for citizens battered by potholes and endless traffic snarls. Instead, it has triggered yet another political row with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) alleging discrimination in the allotment of funds. Constituencies represented by the Congress are slated to receive Rs 50 crore each, while those held by the BJP will be allocated Rs 25 crore. The BJP has denounced this as "stepmotherly treatment", a charge not without merit. Roads and potholes do not differentiate between political parties. They are a shared misery for all Bengalureans, irrespective of who represents their constituency. Ironically, when in Opposition, the Congress had accused the BJP government of similar partisanship.

This selective allocation of funds reflects a worrying trend: the weaponising of development for electoral gain. With the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) elections approaching, the Congress seems more intent on weakening the BJP than addressing the city's pressing infrastructure needs. In the process, the government undermines the very idea of governance. Bengaluru, Karnataka's economic powerhouse, contributes the lion's share of the state's taxes and jobs. It deserves equitable development, not lopsided progress dictated by political exigencies. On the eve of the 2023 Assembly elections, the BJP government allocated nearly Rs 6,000 crore for Bengaluru roads. Much of that money went into asphalting, yet potholes have returned with a vengeance. Citizens, tired of the repeated cycle of broken promises to make Bengaluru pothole-free, have lost faith in the ability of political parties to deliver lasting solutions.

Congress' uneven road funding reignites accusations of political favouritism

Shivakumar's assurance that "every constituency benefits" rings hollow when the allocations are disproportionate. Uneven grants will inevitably lead to an imbalance of development, with some areas getting a facelift while others remain neglected. This is not how a global city should be governed. Bengaluru is a hub for investment and innovation, but its aspirations are repeatedly undermined by poor infrastructure and petty politics. It is time Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and his deputy rose above party lines and acted like statesmen. They often speak of building a fair and equal society—this vision must begin with something as basic as roads. Funds should be released based on ground realities—such as traffic density, road conditions, and population—not party affiliation. Citizens expect potholes to be filled, not political gaps to be widened. Bengaluru needs urgent repair, not discrimination.

COUNTING CASTE

Another survey, another row

SES 2.0 is taking off in Karnataka amid opposition from BJP and dominant communities. Implementing its recommendations would be the real test

B S ARUN

If the leaked recommendations of the first Social and Education Survey (SES) kicked off a huge controversy, forcing the Congress government to junk it, the new survey has courted trouble even before it began.

More than external pressure, the divisions within the state Congress leadership, including in the Cabinet, are said to be behind the trouble faced by the Siddaramaiah government regarding both the SES 1.0 and SES 2.0.

Simply put, the dominant Lingayat and Vokkaliga communities were not keen on the survey being taken up. They were shocked by the findings of the Kantharaj Commission, which said their population was less than that of the Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Muslims.

The new SES will begin in Karnataka on Monday (September 22). To continue till October 7, the survey was ordered as the Congress government refused to accept the old one initiated by its previous dispensation.

While the last SES led to a war of words after the report was completed, the latest one is the result of some 40-odd Christian castes with Hindu names being part of the current SES questionnaire.

While the BJP, as expected, capitalised on the issue, ministers from influential communities attempted to force the chief minister to defer the survey. But Siddaramaiah would have none of it, and asserted that the survey would go ahead as per schedule.

Perhaps, the minister backing the chief minister felt that if the survey was postponed, it could take place only by April 2026; and that no one would know the political picture in the state at that time, given the talk over a possible change of the guard by November.

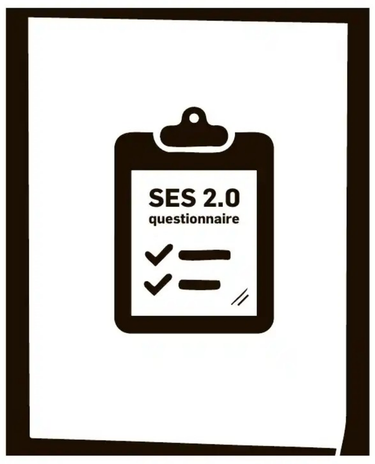
Once the leaked recommendations of the first survey conducted by Justice R Kantharaj were out, the two communities called it unscientific and demanded its rejection, saying thousands of households had been left out of the survey. Another criticism was that the survey had removed several castes from the exercise.

The new survey

The new SES—costing Rs 420 crore (as against Rs 165 crore of the first SES) and covering an estimated 7 crore people—has released a handbook listing out 1,561 castes besides more than 101 under SCs and over 50 under Scheduled Tribes (STs).

The BJP has strongly criticised the state government for inclusion of Christian castes with Hindu caste names, saying this has been done mainly to get reservation benefits.

The saffron party, and some Congress ministers, demanded that these 40-odd Christian castes should be deleted, adding that caste survey should be deferred so that loopholes could be corrected. The list includes castes such as Billava Christian, Kuruba Christian, Brahmana Christian, Devanga Christian, Ediga Christian, Golla Christian, Jangama Christian etc.



However, it seems the Backward Classes Commission that is undertaking the survey told the government that it won't delete the Christian caste names since the previous survey too contained them.

Interestingly, similar Hindu caste names are also listed among Jains. However, this has not triggered any controversy. A massive dispute within the powerful Lingayat community has revived against the backdrop of the survey. But this has nothing to do with the government.

A group of Lingayat associations, including Lingayat Mathadheesha Federation, Global Lingayat Mahasabha and National Basava Dal, is up in arms against the All India Veerashaiva Mahasabha for calling upon the community followers to register themselves as `Veerashaiva Lingayath' in the caste column.

The Mahasabha is led by some powerful politicians such as minister Eshwar Khandre, veteran Congress leader Shamanur Shivashankarappa and is backed by former CM and BJP veteran B S Yediyurappa. The group wants only 'Lingayat' to be mentioned as a caste.

The group is also aiming for a separate religion tag for Lingayats. Veerashaiva-Lingayats also want to be a part of it but the group is opposed to this.

The reason: Lingayats are the followers of 12th century social reformer Basaveshwara while Veerashaivas consider themselves Hindus, worship Lord Shiva, and follow Hindu rituals.

Veerashaivas, the group says, are only one among the 100-plus subcastes falling under the broader Lingayat community. Veerashaivas are opposed to considering only Lingayat as a religion.

The survey handbook does not mention Lingayat as a religion. It contains a list of religions that includes Hindu, Islam, Christian, Jain, Sikh, Buddhist, and Parsi. Interestingly, it has other options such as 'Atheist', 'Not Known', 'Refuse to Disclose', and 'Others'.

There is also an argument why the SES is undertaking the survey since the forthcoming general census will also conduct a caste census. Another question is: why should the SES include the SCs, since the Nagamohan Das panel has completed the survey regarding the population of the SCs for the purpose of internal reservation in the state?

The answer: while both are only headcounts, the SES is a survey to know the educational and social background of the entire population of the state, which will help future governments in framing policies and programmes.

Will the survey have any bearing on the state Congress politics? Will it leave the CM stronger than before or weaker? It depends on the findings of the exercise. The tabulation and resultant findings may take time. The commission will also have to make recommendations suggesting the reservation formula.

If the survey findings turn out to be similar to the last SES, the dominant communities may have a go at Siddaramaiah while the OBC-Dalit-Minority group may back him.

With the field survey, only half the work would be over. The real test is in implementing its findings and recommendations.

(The writer is a senior journalist based in Bengaluru)

RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE

Perched on a promise of luxury

My 'Mercedes Benz' ride turned into a three-hour balancing act

RAMA KASHYAP

My experience with inter-city travel by road dates back to my MPhil days at the university in Amritsar. Almost every weekend, I would shuttle between my hometown, Jalandhar, and Amritsar on state roadways buses. After I finished my studies, my bus journeys continued, though along a different route. Now I commuted frequently between Jalandhar and Chandigarh, where I worked. Who bothered about deluxe buses in those days? I would merrily hop on any ordinary, non-AC bus.

Until I got married, I had no experience of intercity travel except by public transport. In fact, it was nearly two years into my marriage in the 1980s—when we graduated from a Lambretta scooter to a Maruti 800—that we ventured out of the city in a car. I still remember being more nervous and tense than my husband as he drove from Chandigarh to Jalandhar. At first, travelling on the highway in our own car felt like an adventure, but gradually it became a way of life. As the personal vehicle grew into the preferred mode of travel, bus journeys became rare – little more than memories from the past.

However, there is one bus journey from the not-so-distant past that I can never forget. It was an extraordinary experience travelling by an (extra) ordinary luxury bus almost a decade ago – not as a young girl, but as a middle-aged woman.

I was travelling alone from Jalandhar to Chandigarh after Bhai Dooj on a Sunday afternoon. While many ordinary buses left at short intervals, I was determined to travel by a luxury coach. This being the Diwali weekend, the bus terminal was crowded. The moment a super luxury Mercedes-Benz coach arrived, people scrambled for tickets. Desperate to reach Chandigarh on time, I joined the fray and felt jubilant when I managed to get one.

My excitement vanished the instant I stepped onto the bus. Not a single seat was vacant. To my shock, no fewer than a dozen people were already standing in the aisle. Before I could grasp the situation, I saw plastic stools being placed in the passageway from one end of the bus to the other. Lo and behold! Within minutes, seats had been created for all the standing passengers.

Perched on a stool, precariously balancing myself on a small 10"x10" square, I endured a three-hour, bone-rattling journey on a bumpy road – at nearly three times the fare of an ordinary bus. I wasn't the only one, though. A dozen other gullible passengers shared this so-called 'luxurious ride' on a 'Luxury Bus', swaying uncertainly on stools.

The most shocking revelation: the bus belonged to a private company owned by the state's most powerful political family then in power. For me, it was a one-off, unusual experience, but in those days, it was a common practice for private luxury operators to squeeze in extra passengers on stools. Jai ho!

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

India must accelerate investments in innovation, R&D

Apropos 'US delivers H-1B visa fee jolt; techies in panic mode' (Sep 21), US President Donald Trump's decision to introduce a $100,000 fee for new H-1B visa applicants has sparked concern, potentially disrupting global talent flows and straining companies that rely on skilled foreign workers. Although existing visa holders and renewals are exempt, the substantial cost for new applicants may deter Indian IT majors like TCS, Infosys, and Wipro, which have traditionally relied on Indian talent for US-based projects. While this policy may face legal challenges, the uncertainty surrounding it could impact business continuity, project planning, and hiring strategies across the tech industry. This development highlights the need for India to bolster its domestic capabilities. Indian IT firms have started reducing their dependence on visas by increasing local hiring abroad. However, the long-term solution lies in developing world-class talent pipelines within India. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's emphasis on self-reliance in strategic sectors is a timely move. To future-proof its growth, India must accelerate investments in innovation, research and development, and digital infrastructure.
K Chidanand Kumar, Bengaluru

City deserves better

Apropos 'Rains push city's fragile infra to the brink' (Sep 19), Bengaluru's infrastructure woes are exacerbated every monsoon. The recent rains have turned roads into rivers, stranded commuters, and highlighted the city's struggle with basic infrastructure issues. Driving on Bengaluru's roads is more like navigating obstacles than a smooth ride. The situation worsens for those relying on public transport or cabs, with long delays, cancelled rides, and extra charges. The government must ensure safe, durable roads and proper drainage. It is time for authorities to shift from temporary fixes to long-term solutions. Bengaluru deserves better infrastructure to match its status as India's tech hub.
Nabonita Banerjee, Bengaluru

Action important

Apropos 'Dy CM says potholes will be fixed by November' (Sep 18), it is hoped that the Deputy CM's words translate into action and lead to improvements in Bengaluru's roads. To ensure the effectiveness of pothole repairs, attention should be paid to preventing water accumulation and ensuring the repairs last long. The goal should be to ensure that the repairs are durable.
A K Shariff, Mysuru

Our readers are welcome to email letters to: **letters@deccanherald.co.in** (only letters emailed – not handwritten – will be accepted). All letters must carry the sender's postal address and phone number.

SPEAK OUT

Their 'M-Y' equation is about dividing us in the name of caste and religion, but in my equation, 'M' stands for 'Mahila' and 'Y' for 'Yuva'...

Chirag Paswan, Union Minister

Pay less attention to what men say. Just watch what they do.

Dale Carnegie

TO BE PRECISE

H-IB visa fees hike will choke US innovation and boost India's : ex CEO Niti Aayog

IN PERSPECTIVE

Diella's debut and lessons for India

If Tirana can seat an AI minister at the Cabinet table, surely New Delhi can pilot algorithmic oversight in procurement and licensing

CHITRA SARUPARIA

Earlier this month, Albania stunned the world by announcing that it had inducted an artificial intelligence-powered government "minister" to oversee public procurement. The AI system — named Diella, meaning "sun" — will gradually take charge of awarding government tenders, a process often riddled with bribery and favouritism. Prime Minister Edi Rama described it as a way to make procurement "100% corruption-free".

This is no publicity stunt. Procurement is among the most corruption-prone areas of government. By putting an incorruptible algorithm in charge, Albania is betting that technology can succeed where human ministers have failed. If it works, Tirana's experiment could offer lessons for countries like India, where corruption in public spending remains a chronic challenge.

Diella is the world's first AI to hold a formal ministerial role. A few days ago, she made her debut in parliament in traditional Albanian dress, declaring, "I am not here to replace people but to help them."

The symbolism is powerful: an "official" who cannot take bribes, play favourites, or delay files for kickbacks. In theory, this removes the opacity and discretion where corruption thrives. For Albania, a country seeking European Union membership and long criticised for governance gaps, it is also a signal of seriousness. Transparency International's 2024 Corruption Perceptions Index ranks Albania 80th out of 180 countries, reflecting persistent weaknesses in governance.

India has been steadily deploying digital tools to curb corruption. The Government e-Marketplace (GeM) has brought transparency to procurement, with a record Rs 5.4 trillion in transactions in 2023–24, according to the Ministry of Commerce. Direct Benefit Transfers (DBT) have reduced leakage in welfare schemes. Blockchain pilots are underway for land records in several states.

And with the Union Cabinet recently approving the IndiaAI (Jan AI) Mission with an outlay of over Rs 10,000 crore, India has positioned itself to build a home-grown, open and accountable AI ecosystem that could be extended to procurement transparency.

Corruption continues to be widespread in India. Transparency International's 2024 Index places the country at 96, reflecting frequent reports from citizens of bribery and misuse of public office across various sectors. The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) frequently flags irregularities in infrastructure, mining and procurement, but often years after the losses are incurred. In effect, oversight is still retrospective, not preventive.

This is where Albania's gamble becomes relevant. Could AI systems not just support but actively oversee high-value tenders—flagging suspicious bids, detecting cartels and identifying conflicts of interest in real time?

Of course, there are pitfalls. If historical procurement data reflects past favouritism, AI trained on it could reproduce the same patterns. When a minister errs, they can resign or face inquiry. But who takes responsibility if an algorithm mishandles a contract? Citizens must see how decisions are made. If the algorithm is a black box built by a handful of engineers, suspicion may grow, not shrink.

In India, where tendering is often a lucrative nexus, entrenched actors would try hard to undermine or bypass AI oversight. Instead of appointing a "virtual minister", India could take a phased approach: 1) Deploy AI to monitor all contracts above Rs 100 crore, automatically flagging anomalies to the CAG and the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC); 2) Make AI findings public on open dashboards, so civil society and media can act as additional watchdogs; 3) Insist on open-source algorithms, subject to independent academic and technical audits; 4) Use AI as a filter, not a replacement — flagging suspicious cases for human investigators.

Such steps would balance efficiency with accountability. They would also fit India's digital strengths: from Aadhaar to UPI to GeM, the country has shown its ability to build massive, citizen-facing platforms. The Jan AI framework could provide the foundation for an AI-driven procurement oversight system that is both scalable and trusted.

Whether Diella succeeds or fails, Albania has forced the world to imagine governance differently. If Tirana can allow an AI to sit at the Cabinet table, surely New Delhi can pilot AI oversight in procurement and licensing.

AI will not end corruption on its own. However, by narrowing discretion, speeding up processes and shining light into the darkest corners of governance, it can tilt the balance. The rest depends on political will, institutional safeguards and civic vigilance.

Diella may or may not deliver a corruption-free tendering system. But she has already done one thing: she has challenged us to rethink how we fight corruption in the age of artificial intelligence. For India, the question is no longer "if", but "when".

(The writer is director, Centre of Economics, Law and Public Policy at National Law University, Jodhpur)

Bridging the labour divide: Indian talent fuelling Germany's ambitions

ANITHA PAILOOR

A study published last month by the Institute for Employment Research (IAB), a research institute of Germany's Federal Employment Agency, show that the country will require around 1,57,000 additional workers by 2030 to enable its proposed energy transition. As Europe's largest economy aims to become carbon neutral by 2045, the fall in the working-age population has become a bottleneck in many green sectors, such as renewable energy.

Apart from decarbonisation and digitalisation, a host of other sectors in Germany, including healthcare, construction and services, also require a skilled workforce.

With an ageing population and a shrinking workforce, Germany is grappling with one of its most acute labour shortages in several decades.

A 2024 study commissioned by the Bertelsmann Foundation found that Germany will require around 2,88,000 international workers annually until 2040 to prevent the potential labour force from collapsing. Without considerable immigration, Germany's workforce could shrink by 10% by 2040, the study said.

To keep pace with its socio-economic and climate goals, Germany is framing policies and programmes to attract a skilled workforce from other countries. In this process, India has emerged as a vital partner, says a representative of iMOVE, Germany (International Marketing of Vocational Education), an initiative that facilitates cooperation between German training providers and their international partners, with a specific focus on vocational education. Their India office is located in Bengaluru.

The German training industry is rooted in the German dual VET (vocational education and training) system, which involves learning within the work process, the cooperation of government, the business community and social partners, and institutionalised research and advice.

The iMOVE centre in India provides a range of services to support Indo-German cooperation in the area of initial and continuing vocational education and training. These include advice on cooperation with the German education and training sector.

India is a major contributor to Germany's skilled labour pool and is helping to fill the gaps in the German workforce. According to German Labour Ministry statistics, around 1,37,000 skilled Indian professionals were working in Germany last year. A decade ago, the numbers stood at 23,000. As many as 16% of Indian youth work in specialist positions in Germany, while 37% work as experts.

In an effort to attract more Indians, last year Germany decided to increase annual visas for skilled Indian workers from 20,000 to 90,000.

Education: A pathway

Simultaneously, Indian students who study in German universities often seek to find employment and continue living in Germany after their studies. An upGrad report published recently shows that Germany has replaced the US as a top destination for Indian students studying abroad. The share of international students from India in Germany rose from 13% in 2022 to 32% in 2024.

An Indian student in Germany says that a majority of his friends hope to continue working in the country after completing their course. What appeals to him the most is the unparalleled work-life balance.

Opportunities

From renewable energy to digitisation, the IT and automobile industries, and more, the demand spans multiple industries. Green jobs, comprising the solar, wind and electric mobility sectors, are one of the key areas. There is a good scope for engineers, project managers and technicians in these sectors. Similarly, the country's ambitious digital transformation plans are creating space for Indian IT specialists, particularly those with expertise in artificial intelligence, cloud computing, and cybersecurity.

Healthcare is another sector with soaring demand. Tailored migration programmes and fast-track qualification recognition processes have been designed to attract Indian professionals, nurses, caregivers and medical technicians to move, work and settle there. For instance, in December 2024, iMOVE signed an MoU with NSDC International, LMCare AG, and Aartees to enable the sourcing, training and placement of Indian healthcare professionals, particularly nurses, in Germany.

Bilateral agreements, like the Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreement 2022, have made it easier for Indian professionals to get their qualifications recognised, secure visas and access training programmes.

While opportunities are vast, moving into Germany is not without challenges. "Paperwork can be daunting, and language and culture remain a significant barrier in both professional and personal lives. Those who are planning to move to Germany should aim to have at least B1-level German proficiency, without which integration into the society will become extremely difficult. Also, racism is not dead; it is still lurking in a dark corner of modern German history," says K M Rakesh, a journalist based in Berlin. "While Germany is highly bureaucratic, where delays are common, the system always works," he adds.

While numbers indicate huge vacancies in various sectors, there have been heavy layoffs recently in both the tech and automobile sectors, which brings into question the nature of these jobs and the security they provide, says Rakesh.

"On the positive side, whether you are a student or an expat, easy mobility is a key advantage that Germany provides. With the Schengen visa, one can travel to around two dozen countries," he says. "Other pluses include healthcare access and affordability and good public transport. More than anything else, Germany is a democratic and secular country," he adds.

(The writer had visited Germany at the invitation of the Federal Foreign Office to study the immigration of skilled workers)

While US officials claim the humanitarian aid cuts have caused no fatalities, on the ground, children are starving, falling ill, and dying as essential food and health services disappear

NICHOLAS KRISTOF

Valentine Tusifu (left), a refugee who fled from Congo and is now in Rwamwanja, Uganda, mourns her daughter, Jibia (right). Jibia succumbed to malaria as the healthcare system disintegrated along with aid budgets. NYT

Cuts to foreign aid are Trump's most lethal policy

The Donald Trump administration has claimed that no one has died because of its cuts to humanitarian aid, and it is now trying to cancel an additional $4.9 billion in aid that Congress already approved. Yet what I find here in desperate villages in southwestern Uganda is that not only are aid cuts killing children every day but that the death toll is accelerating.

Stockpiles of food and medicine are running out here. Village health workers who used to provide inexpensive preventive care have been laid off. Public health initiatives like deworming and vitamin A distribution have collapsed. Immunisations are being missed. Contraception is harder to get. Ordinary people are growing weaker, hungrier and more fragile. So as months pass, the crisis is not easing but growing increasingly lethal—and because children are particularly vulnerable, they are often the first to starve and the first to die.

It's difficult to know how many children are dying worldwide as a result of the Trump aid cuts, but credible estimates by experts suggest that the child death toll may be in the hundreds of thousands this year alone — and likely will be even higher next year. In short, President Donald Trump's cuts appear to be by far the most lethal policy step he has taken.

Some will think, at least this is saving taxpayers money. But hold on.

I obtained a June 3 State Department memo, headed "sensitive but unclassified," saying that the shutdown of the US Agency for International Development will cost taxpayers $6.4 billion over two years. The memo, the subject of earlier reporting by Bloomberg Government, said the money is necessary to manage "litigation, claims, residual payments and closeout activities."

That's enough money to save more than 1 million children's lives. Instead, it is being used to shut down programs that save lives.

Let me introduce Trump to the mothers of children that his cost-cutting has killed.

Valentine Tusifu, a 36-year-old refugee from Congo, is mourning her 10-year-old daughter, Jibia. The girl excelled in school here in Rwamwanja, ranking third out of 58 students in her fourth grade class and dreamed of becoming a nurse.

But the family had to pull Jibia out of school in May when the loss of American funding led to a mass firing of teachers. Jibia cried inconsolably, her mother recalled, as the girl became an elementary school dropout.

Then it got worse. The family's mosquito nets developed holes, but with aid cuts, the health centre had run out of new nets, so Jibia slept unprotected. She contracted malaria. Normally, a village health worker would have handed out an inexpensive medicine, but that system disintegrated along with aid budgets, and so did the supply of anti-malaria medication.

So Jibia's mom took the girl, feverish and vomiting, to the local health centre, but it, too, had run out of necessary medicines. Doctors say they tried to rush the girl to a regional hospital. But ambulances were unavailable because drivers had been laid off as a result of cuts in US assistance.

By the time Jibia arrived at the hospital, the malaria had destroyed her red blood cells, leaving her urine dark with their residue, medical records show. A person normally has a haemoglobin level above 10; Jibia's stood at 2.9. So she desperately needed a blood transfusion, but Uganda's blood transfusion program relied on American support and is now struggling. A transfusion was unavailable. So Jibia died July 7.

"It was aid cuts," her mom said — without bitterness or any sense of entitlement, simply stating a fact that is obvious on the ground here.

Indeed, one tangible consequence of Trump's presidency is child-size graves being dug around the world. While Secretary of State Marco Rubio has claimed that the aid cuts haven't killed anyone, he should look up from his talking points and learn the truth.

A recent study published in *The Lancet* estimated that the cuts will cost the lives of 690,000 children under the age of 5 in 2025, and 829,000 next year. The study estimated that some 3.1 million children under age 5 would die during Trump's second term because of his cuts in humanitarian assistance. That amounts to 88 children dying each hour of Trump's second term because of his aid policy.

In April and May, the World Food Programme had to halt support for 63% of refugees in Uganda (and even the rest of the refugees now receive very little), the United Nations says. For the last few months, most have received nothing at all.

Elina Ndacyayisaba, 27, said that her husband abandoned the family in May after the World Food Programme assistance ended. With no food in the house, her 1-year-old son, John Abraham, began to fade away.

American aid cuts had made ambulance service unreliable, so she carried John for three hours to a health centre. John was diagnosed with severe acute malnutrition and dehydration, but doctors said that the health centre had run out of necessary supplies to help. John Abraham died August 7.

One of America's proudest programmes has been the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, or PEPFAR, founded by President George W Bush with the strong backing of America's evangelical Christians. It turned the tide of AIDS and has saved 26 million lives — but the Trump administration has withheld some of its funding, and the administration has developed a plan to wind it down.

Despite the claims of some administration officials that they are preserving PEPFAR, that's not what I see on the ground. About 65% of PEPFAR awards have been cancelled, and from South Sudan to Sierra Leone to Uganda, I find people getting sick and dying because of PEPFAR dysfunction — and this, too, seems likely to accelerate as people go without antiretroviral drugs and viral loads grow.

Pascaline Nkunda, 32, is a Congolese woman who was raped by soldiers and infected with HIV. She fled to Uganda and was able to get antiretrovirals through American aid — until April. Since then she has been unable to get the drugs, and the virus is gaining ground. "I feel myself weakening," she said. She is terrified that she will be gone with no one to care for her five children.

I understand that Americans are weary of international burdens and don't feel it is their job to save every impoverished person. But a bed net that would have saved Jibia costs $2. Do we really believe that the richest nation in the history of the world couldn't afford a $2 net for Jibia?

Uganda has been extraordinarily welcoming to nearly two million refugees from Congo, South Sudan and other neighbours — to me its generosity to others is a reason to be generous to Ugandans as well — for it is better off than some other African countries. If the situation is now this desperate here, imagine what it is like in Congo, the Central African Republic, South Sudan and Sudan.

The lives at stake are of children like Fred Irasubiza, a bit more than six months old.

Fred, who weighs just 6.6 pounds, is close to death from starvation. It's not clear if he will celebrate his first birthday.

As it happens, there's a miraculous substance to save the lives of children like Fred. It's a peanut paste stuffed with micronutrients in a single-serving foil packet, and it has saved millions of lives over the last two decades. Known as Plumpy'Nut or RUTF, for ready-to-use therapeutic food, it costs just 50 cents a packet, and the US has historically been a generous donor of it.

What I've seen in my reporting this year on the Trump aid cuts — in South Sudan, Kenya, Sierra Leone, Liberia and now Uganda — is that regardless of what the Trump administration claims, these kinds of highly effective interventions are falling apart. This is maddening, for saving a child costs less than the $30 or so for the coffin in which he is buried.

The New York Times

A day to honour machines, capital

MOUSUMI ROY

In most countries, holidays are built around people, gods, or battles. Nations honour their founding fathers, martyrs, or heroes. However, in India, one festival takes a different path: Vishwakarma Puja, celebrated usually in September. It is not about kings or soldiers. It is about machines.

On this day, workers across factories and workshops clean their tools, adorn engines with garlands, and offer prayers to Vishwakarma, the divine architect and cosmic engineer. The rituals may seem quaint, but the symbolism is profound. To celebrate Vishwakarma is to celebrate technology itself. It is to acknowledge that the engine of prosperity is human labour or natural bounty and the tools we build to amplify both.

Labour Day honours workers, Earth Day honours nature, and Vishwakarma Day, by contrast, honours the capital stock, the machines, robots, and software that make growth possible.

The economist Robert Solow demonstrated that much of modern growth comes from increasing labour and boosting productivity through capital and technology. A plough magnifies a farmer's hands, just as a supercomputer magnifies a researcher's mind. Today, our "capital" is no longer looms and tractors. Robots assemble cars, algorithms route deliveries, and artificial intelligence designs new drugs. Thus, Vishwakarma Day is a festival with an economic edge. It reminds us that tools are not secondary—they are central.

Traditionally, Vishwakarma Puja was about polishing lathes and decorating sewing machines. However, today, the question is obvious: what should we worship? The laptop on our desk? The smartphone in our pocket? The invisible AI models running in the cloud? If a hammer extends the fist, then AI extends the brain. Machines have moved from muscle to mind. Moreover, that shift is not incremental; it is civilisational. To honour Vishwakarma today is to honour the assembly line and the algorithm.

In public debate, technology is often treated with suspicion. We worry about robots stealing jobs or algorithms manipulating elections. Some see machines as threats; others as saviours. Vishwakarma Puja offers a third stance: gratitude. This is not naive techno-worship. It is a sober recognition that machines are what stand between scarcity and abundance. Every harvest brought in, every vaccine manufactured, and every flight landed safely depended on machines. To pause and thank them is to recognise the hidden infrastructure of prosperity.

Why not make it national?

India treats Vishwakarma Day as a cultural holiday. However, why not elevate it into something more? Why not make it a global celebration of abundance? A Vishwakarma Day writ large would be a reminder that prosperity does not come from wishful thinking or political rhetoric. It comes from engineering, from the deliberate act of building machines that allow humans to do more with less.

Instead of celebrating only human toil or natural bounty, this would be a holiday for tools, capital, and invention. Imagine schools teaching the story of the plough alongside the story of labour struggles. Imagine parades not just of soldiers and dancers but of tractors, 3D printers, and robots. Imagine a day when we collectively say, "Thank you, machines, for lifting the weight of civilisation."

This is not to diminish labour or land. Without workers, machines are idle. Without resources, machines are useless. However, the truth is stark: capital turns effort into progress. A worker with no tools is a subsistence farmer. A worker with machines is a participant in modern abundance. If Earth Day is for the planet and Labour Day is for the worker, then Vishwakarma Day should be for capital, the third pillar of prosperity, too often ignored but impossible to live without.

So today, do not just thank Mother Earth. Do not just thank the labourer. Take a moment to thank the machines. The buses that carried us to work. The servers are delivering this article to our screen: the washing machines, the microchips, the MRI scanners, and the satellites.

Vishwakarma Day is not a relic of a mythic past. It is a holiday for the future. A celebration of abundance. A reminder that human progress is not only about who we are but also about what we build. If Labour Day belongs to workers and Earth Day belongs to nature, then Vishwakarma Day should be our holiday for machines, robots, and AI. It should be a festival for capital, a holiday for progress, and a national day for abundance.

(The author writes on politics, material culture, and economic history)

OUR PAGES OF HISTORY

50 YEARS AGO: SEPTEMBER 1975

Gigantic plan to utilise India's water resources

Bombay, September 21
A gigantic project to trap, store, distribute and utilise India's enormous fresh water supply for agricultural growth and settle India's unemployed millions of poor and landless in the next 10 years, has been submitted to the Centre by a Bombay firm of consulting engineers. If implemented, it is claimed, the project will eliminate recurrent floods and drought, multiply power generation and double or treble India's agricultural production by 1990.

25 YEARS AGO: SEPTEMBER 2000

Raj Kidnap protest: Many injured in police caning

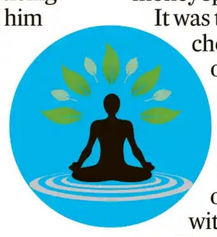
Bangalore, Sept 21
Several people were injured and at least 40 vehicles, including seven BMTC buses, were damaged as a silent procession taken out by Dr Rajkumar's fans and the Kannada film fraternity in the City in protest against the delay in securing the release of the star actor took a violent turn when a section of the crowd began throwing stones over rumours about Mrs Parvathamma Rajkumar's health. The injured were treated at private nursing homes.

OASIS | DOROTHY VICTOR

The essence of kindness

In our fast-paced lives, as we move through each day, we are often presented with the choice to show kindness over indifference. A recent experience involving a close friend brought this truth into sharp focus.

After spending two cherished weeks with us on holiday, he was preparing to return. In the flurry of packing and saying goodbyes, he forgot to buy sweets for his colleagues and friends – a small tradition he usually followed after every trip. Realising this, he told me that he would make a quick stop at one of the airport shops before boarding his flight. When I asked him about it the next day, he shared what had happened.



As he stood at the counter selecting a few boxes of sweets, the lady at the checkout, perhaps noticing his indecision, gently urged him to consider adding a bit more to his cart so that she could reach her monthly sales target.

He could have easily declined. But instead, he paused, considered her situation, and chose to do something kind. He asked her how much more she needed to hit her target and then told her to go ahead and bill him up to that amount. Just like that, a small, unexpected moment turned into an act of kindness. What struck me about this story wasn't the money spent or the sweets purchased.

It was the spontaneous decision to choose kindness over reason or logic. This, to me, is the essence of kindness – a decision that is spontaneous, unpublicised and arising from simply noticing someone in need and responding with empathy.

The decision to show kindness created ripples that extended well beyond that moment. The woman at the counter likely went home not just relieved but uplifted by a stranger's empathy. For my friend, that brief encounter certainly became an opportunity to seize and embody generosity, a virtue that quietly shapes character over time.

In a world that often feels indifferent, choosing kindness, even in small, everyday situations, can spark connection, understanding and a sense of shared humanity. We may not always remember the sweets we buy or the errands we complete, but we do remember the kindness that guided our actions. Kindness leaves behind a gentle but lasting trail, one that echoes far beyond the moment it was offered.

Joint Parl Committee on contentious bills stalls amid Oppn boycott

Bills to oust arrested leaders remain in limbo

SHEMIN JOY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The formation of the Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) to examine the contentious bills for the removal of top political executives detained in jail for at least 30 consecutive days appears to be a non-starter even after a month, apparently due to non-cooperation from the Opposition, with several parties announcing a boycott.

The members of two select committees for examining The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (Amendment) Bill, 2025, and The Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Bill, 2025, are yet to be announced, despite both bills having been referred to the panels in mid-August. The bill on insolvency was referred on August 13, and the other on August 18.

The motion to send the three bills — the Constitution (130th Amendment) Bill, The Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill and The Union Territories Administration (Amendment) Bill proposing the removal of the prime minister, chief ministers and Union and state ministers — to a joint committee was cleared by the Lok Sabha on August 20, and by the Rajya Sabha a day later.

The panel will comprise 21 Lok Sabha MPs and 10 Rajya Sabha MPs. It is mandated to submit its report by the last day of the first week of the next session. If not extended, the deadline is likely to end in the third or fourth week of November, as the Winter Session is expected to begin in the second half of the month.

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on September 13 said that no party has written to him about boycotting the joint committee. He said in Bengaluru that he has sought the names of MPs from parties, and the joint committee will be constituted once he receives the list.

The announcement of the committee members has not been made so far in the parliamentary bulletins, amid the Trinamool Congress, Samajwadi Party, AAP and Shiv Sena (UBT) announcing that they will not join the panel, alleging that the bills are being used as a "political weapon".

There are two views in the Congress on whether to join the panel, but the party is likely to go by the broader Opposition stance.

While insisting that it will go by the joint Opposition decision, the CPM has voiced its displeasure over some parties rushing to announce the boycott, and while has criticised the Congress for not steering discussions on time to forge a common stand.

CPM General Secretary MA Baby said the party will oppose the bills. "Every party in both Houses of Parliament should show sufficient sagacity and seriousness in coordinating among the Opposition parties. The CPM cannot take the leadership for obvious reasons. Still we are talking to various parties to evolve a common strategy," Baby said.

Greatness lies in qualities, not caste or religion, says Gadkari

MUMBAI, DHNS: Asserting that he does not believe in caste and creed, Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari said that no human should be greater because of caste, religion or language but only because of qualities.

Nitin Gadkari

"I tell them that no human is greater because of caste, religion or language, but only because of their qualities... in fact, I often joke that the biggest favour God has done for me is that I am a Brahmin and did not get reservation," Gadkari said at the golden jubilee celebrations of the Halba Samaj Mahasangh in Nagpur, the constituency that he represents in the Lok Sabha.

He stated that in Maharashtra, while the Marathas hold dominant social and political significance, the Brahmin community does not hold much importance or dominance, but in northern states like Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, their presence is significant.

"Whenever I go there, I see that Dubeys, Mishras, and Tripathis hold considerable power and influence," he said.

"I always tell people that I do not believe in caste and creed. No human being is superior because of caste, religion, or language, but only because of their qualities," the minister said.

UP official to followers: 'Want to meet me? Share my posts'

SANJAY PANDEY
LUCKNOW, DHNS

An Uttar Pradesh bureaucrat with over 2.5 lakh Instagram followers stirred buzz in state bureaucratic circles after laying out a bizarre condition for those wishing to meet her.

Swati Gupta, a senior official in the state's Panchayati Raj department, said that followers wanting to meet her must first become a 'top fan' on her Facebook page and share her posts daily for 30 days.

Gupta went live on Facebook on Sunday morning to interact with her followers. Her unusual condition came to light when a user asked how he could meet her.

She said she would invite individuals who met the condition to meet her, and added that details of such meetings would be posted on her social media account.

The video purportedly containing the official's remarks went viral, triggering varied reactions online. Some netizens said that the move was unprofessional and violated bureaucratic ethics.

Gupta, who hails from UP's Meerut, is highly active on social media. It remains to be seen whether any of her followers will fulfil the conditions and get a chance to meet her.

India must chart its own path to shield itself: Bhagwat

NEW DELHI, PTI: India must do whatever is necessary to get out of the situation that has emerged but it should start charting its own path following the 'sanatana' view of development to shield itself from such problems in the future, RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat said on Sunday in the backdrop of US decisions on tariffs and immigration.

Addressing an event here, Bhagwat said the problem that India and other countries are facing today is the outcome of the system that the world has been following for the last 2000 years based on a fragmented vision of development and happiness. "We can't turn our backs on the situation. We must do whatever is necessary to get out of it well. But we can't proceed blindly."

"So we need to chart our own path. We will find a way out... But inevitably, we will have to face all these things at some or other point in future again," he added.

He said India should follow its age-old approach of four goals of life, 'artha' (wealth), 'kama' (desire and pleasure) and 'moksha' (salvation) bound by dharma that "ensures that no one is left behind".

EC asks state officials to be ready for SIR by Sept 30

States asked to ready old rolls for comparison

NEW DELHI, PTI

The Election Commission has asked its state election officers to be ready for a Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls by September 30, in an indication that the poll authority could launch the voter list cleanup exercise as early as October-November.

According to officials, at a conference of state chief electoral officers (CEOs) here earlier this month, the EC top brass asked them to be ready for the SIR rollout in the next 10 to 15 days. But for the sake of greater clarity, the deadline of September 30 was set.

The CEOs have been told to keep voter lists of their states, published after the last SIR, ready. Several state CEOs have already put up the voter lists published after their last SIR on their websites.

The website of the Delhi CEO has the voter list from 2008, when the last intensive revision took place in the national capital.

In Uttarakhand, the last SIR took place in 2006, and the electoral roll from that year is now on the state CEO's website.

The last SIR in states will serve as the cut-off date, just as the 2003 voter list of Bihar is being used by the EC for intensive revision.

Most states had the last SIR between 2002 and 2004 and have nearly completed mapping of current electors with those as per the last intensive revision.

Nationwide exercise

The EC has said that after Bihar, SIR will be carried out in the entire country.

Assembly elections in Assam, Kerala, Puducherry, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal are due in 2026.

According to the Election Commission, the primary aim of the intensive revision is to weed out foreign illegal migrants by checking their place of birth.

The move assumes significance in the wake of a crackdown in various states on illegal foreign migrants, including from Bangladesh and Myanmar.

MHA panel meet with Ladakh leadership on October 6

SRINAGAR, DHNS: The Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has called a fresh meeting of the High-Powered Committee (HPC) on Ladakh in New Delhi on October 6, in what is being seen as a key step toward addressing the region's long-pending political demands.

Sources confirmed that invitations had been extended to representatives of the Leh Apex Body (LAB) and Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA), the Union Territory's Lieutenant-Governor (L-G), Ladakh's lone Member of Parliament, and the chiefs of the two Hill Councils.

Union Minister of State for Home Nityanand Rai is expected to chair the meeting.

This will mark the HPC's fourth sitting since it was created specifically to engage the LAB and the KDA leadership on their charter of demands.

The two groups have been jointly advocating for constitutional safeguards under the Sixth Schedule, full-fledged statehood, and enhanced political representation.

The renewed talks come at a time of mounting criticism from political and civil society groups, which have accused New Delhi of dragging its feet on assurances given after the abrogation of Article 370 in 2019 and Ladakh's classification as a separate UT.

While previous engagements ended without a breakthrough, sources said the October 6 round would see deliberations on possible constitutional and administrative guarantees for Ladakh.

Mortal remains of Lance Dafadar Baldev Chand, who died during an operation in Udhampur on the night of September 19-20, during the wreath-laying ceremony, in Jammu. PTI

Gunfight breaks out in J&K's Kishtwar forests

ZULFIKAR MAJID
SRINAGAR, DHNS

An intense gun battle broke out between security forces and terrorists on Sunday afternoon in the dense forests of Keshwan in Jammu and Kashmir's Kishtwar district.

"Alert troops of the White Knight Corps, at around 1 pm today, while carrying out an intelligence-based operation in the general area of Kishtwar, have established contact with terrorists. Fire exchanged with terrorists. Operation is in progress," the Army's Nagrota-based White Knight Corps posted on its official X handle.

Sources said the operation was launched by the Rashtriya Rifles after receiving inputs about the presence of two to three terrorists in the Keshwan forests, which stretch between Doda and Kishtwar districts.

During the initial exchange, the terrorists managed to slip deeper into the rugged forest terrain towards the Kishtwar side. Reinforcements have been rushed to the area to block their escape routes, they added.

Sunday's encounter comes close on the heels of a gunfight in Udhampur district late Friday evening in which an Army soldier was killed.

The Keshwan forests have witnessed deadly gunfights in the past as well. In November last year, a Junior Commissioned Officer (JCO) of the Army's Special Forces, Naib Subedar Rakesh Kumar, was killed and three soldiers were injured in a fierce encounter in the same area.

Days before that, two village defence guards (VDGs), Kuldeep Kumar and Nazir of Kuntwara village, were abducted and executed by terrorists.

Since 2021, the Jammu region, once relatively calm compared to the Kashmir Valley, has witnessed a sharp rise in militant violence, particularly in the Pir Panjal (Rajouri-Poonch) and Chenab Valley (Doda-Kishtwar) belts. A spate of deadly ambushes, attacks on security forces, and killings of civilians and VDGs have marked a troubling shift of militant activity into these mountainous districts.

The region's thick forests and rugged terrain have provided militants with safe hideouts and mobility corridors, enabling them to strike and then melt away.

Security officials believe many of the recent attacks have been carried out by small groups of foreign terrorists who infiltrated from across the Line of Control, with local support networks helping them survive.

The Army and police have since intensified operations, but encounters — like the one on Sunday — underline the persistence of militant presence in the area despite crackdowns.

Kerala : Viswasa Sangamam today to counter Ayyappa summit

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, DHNS: Various Hindu outfits are organising a "Viswasa Sangamam" (believers' gathering) at Pandalam in Kerala on Monday.

The Sabarimala Karma Samathi and Hindu Aikya Vedi are the key organisers of the event, which is being held to apparently counter the Global Ayyappa Conclave organised by Kerala's CPM-led LDF government at Pamba on Saturday.

Former Tamil Nadu BJP president K Annamalai is scheduled to inaugurate Monday's event, which is expected to witness the participation of senior party leaders.

The organisers were learnt to be trying to ensure maximum participation at the event, especially since the participation of devotees at the Global Ayyappa Sangamam was lower than the state government and the Travancore Devaswom Board's expectations.

Even as the organisers claimed that 4,126 delegates participated in the Ayyappa conclave, the low participation at the discussions and the conclusion was very evident from the empty chairs.

Meanwhile, even as the BJP opposed the CPM organising Ayyappa Sangamam, UP Chief Minister and BJP leader Adityanath extended his wishes to the event through a letter.

Streets overflow as Assam mourns Zubeen Garg

GUWAHATI, DHNS

Many streets turned into a sea of humanity on Sunday morning as the mortal remains of Assam's beloved singer and cultural icon Zubeen Garg arrived from Singapore, where he had died suddenly at the age of 52.

Thousands lined the route from the airport, showering flowers and traditional gamosas. Many sang Zubeen's iconic songs and wept as the flower-decked ambulance carrying his body crawled towards his home. His wife Garima broke down as she received the coffin at the airport. Several airport staff were also seen in tears.

Zubeen, a household name in Assam for nearly four decades and known for his music, films and generous spirit, died on Friday, reportedly while swimming in the sea in Singapore. In the death certificate issued on Sunday, the Singapore government cited drowning as the cause of death.

He was in the city to attend the Northeast Festival organised by a firm led by Assamese entrepreneur Shyamkanu Mahanta. After Zubeen's death, Mahanta said he had been informed that Zubeen was out for scuba diving, but his team was unaware of it.

People mourn and take pictures as the mortal remains of singer Zubeen Garg are taken to his residence from Guwahati airport, on Sunday. PTI

Zubeen's body was first taken to his residence in Kahilipara, before being moved to the Sarusajai Sports Complex, where thousands of fans gathered to pay their final respects. Police and paramilitary forces struggled to manage the swelling numbers, as his wife appealed for peace.

Nearly 10 lakh people gathered on Sunday, and the sports complex will remain open for fans on Monday and Tuesday as well.

Since 1992, Zubeen had sung nearly 38,000 songs across more than 40 languages, though most were in Assamese, Hindi and Bengali. He wrote lyrics, composed music, made films and played multiple instruments. In 2006, he rose to national fame with the Hindi song 'Ya Ali' from Gangster.

The singer's last rites will be performed on Tuesday at Sonapur on the outskirts of Guwahati.

54 FIRs filed

Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said 54 FIRs have been filed at police stations across the state, seeking action against those who had taken Zubeen to Singapore. "Most are against Shyamkanu Mahanta and Zubeen's manager Siddhartha Sarma. We have clubbed the cases and asked the CID to conduct the investigation. The Singapore police are also probing the matter, and we will interrogate the two accused to see if there was any conspiracy," Sarma said.

Palaniswami reaches out to Thevars after ouster of TTV, Panneerselvam

E T B SIVAPRIYAN
CHENNAI, DHNS

After ruling out the readmission of expelled leaders such as V K Sasikala, O Panneerselvam, and T T V Dhinakaran, AIADMK general secretary Edappadi K Palaniswami is now reaching out to the influential Mukulathors or Thevars, an umbrella term for Agamudaiyars, Kallars, and Maravars, the community to which all three leaders belong.

During his meeting with Shah in New Delhi on Tuesday night, the main demand that Palaniswami placed before the Union Government, at least on the record, was conferring Bharat Ratna, the country's highest civilian award, on Mukulathor icon Muthuramalinga Thevar.

A fortnight ago, Palaniswami had stirred a hornet's nest by reviving the contentious proposal to rename Madurai Airport after Thevar—an issue previously pushed to the backseat by political parties due to its sensitive nature.

Palaniswami's moves are seen as a desperate attempt to rebuild bridges with the community, which has favoured the AIADMK since the time of its founding by the late M G Ramachandran in 1972. However, his decision to expel her nephew Dhinakaran and Panneerselvam, over the years, led the Thevars to drift from the AIADMK, albeit for now.

The party was pushed to the third position in many Mukulathor-dominated Lok Sabha seats in 2024 polls, with the BJP and its allies like OPS and TTV emerging as the runner-up. Despite this setback, EPS has been adamant that he won't let the expelled leaders return to AIADMK, as he is very clear that his authority should not be questioned and there should be no power centres within the AIADMK.

"Though we maintain in public that Mukulathors continue to remain with us, that is not the case. We have lost their votes in many places because of the perception that AIADMK has become a Gounder party after EPS took over the organisation. We are trying every way to regain those votes," a senior AIADMK leader told *DH*.

Mukulathors are spread across the Central and Southern regions of Tamil Nadu with a significant presence in about 60 assembly constituencies. Though Sasikala, OPS, and TTV are also not seen as leaders of the community, their forced exit from the AIADMK has upset the community members.

Palaniswami has in the past two weeks consistently spoken about Thevar, a highly polarising figure in Tamil Nadu revered by Mukulathors and denounced by Dalits, and his importance in the state's politics. His eulogising of Thevars and seeking a Bharat Ratna for him and renaming the airport after him is likely to backfire with Devendra Kula Vellalars (DKV), a sub-sect of Dalits, taking objection to his suggestions.

Teacher ends life over harassment by colleagues in Telangana

HYDERABAD, PTI: A 29-year-old teacher at a private school allegedly committed suicide at her house here after being "harassed" by two male colleagues, police said on Sunday.

The incident occurred on September 19, and the woman's husband lodged a police complaint alleging that two teachers at her school were "harassing and behaving indecently" towards her, due to which she hanged herself, they said.

The deceased, a science teacher, hailed from Assam.

A case of abetment of suicide was registered against the two teachers, and they were taken into custody. Further investigation is on, police said.

NATURAL RESTORATION

Assam bamboo species brings greenery to Rajasthan village

SUMIR KARMAKAR
GUWAHATI, DHNS

The Nichla Mandwa village in Rajasthan's Udaipur district tried many plants to rejuvenate its arid land before turning to the Jati Bah (bambusa tulda), a climate-resilient bamboo species, found more than 2,200 km away in Assam.

The Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) and Ahmedabad-based NGO National Council for Civil Liberties (NCCL) transported 5,500 saplings of jati bah from a private nursery near Guwahati and planted them in the village in June 2021.

In the four years since then, 25 acres of arid desert land in the village have turned into greenery.

The village land has not only been rejuvenated but also now houses squirrels, peacocks, chameleons, butterflies, dragonflies, grasshoppers, and other creatures.

"Transporting the plants was challenging as the Covid-19 pandemic was still around. But we managed it," said Sukamal Deb, who was then the deputy chief executive officer of KVIC for the northeastern region.

With support from MP Arjun Lal Meena's Local Area Development Fund, a mass plantation was carried out with the involvement of a local woman sarpanch, MLA, and others.

Deb said the initiative began under the leadership of V K Saxena, the current Lieutenant-Governor of Delhi, and the then chairman of the KVIC, after Prime Minister Narendra Modi on June 14, 2021, declared India's commitment to land degradation neutrality, aiming to restore 26 million hectares of degraded land by 2030.

"As part of the plan, the Nichla Mandwa village was selected following Saxena's visit," said Deb.

"The jati bah was specially chosen for its resilience as it consumes less water, has high water retention, and helps raise water tables, apart from emitting 30% more oxygen. Fruit-bearing trees such as amla, guava, mango, and moringa were chosen to introduce new fauna apart from enriching the floral diversity," he said.

Maoist leader's call for peace talks sparks controversy & confusion

CPI(Maoist) Telangana committee distances itself from announcement

S N V SUDHIR
HYDERABAD, DHNS

A letter from CPI(Maoist) spokesperson Abhay announcing willingness to surrender arms and launch peace negotiations with the government appears to have created visible divisions within the Maoist ranks.

While a highly placed source in the intelligence department confirmed the authenticity of the letter and the clip, the Telangana committee of the CPI (Maoist) has distanced itself from the announcement, characterising it as Abhay's personal opinion rather than the party's official position.

In a purported statement, Jagan, the party's Telangana committee spokesperson, criticised Abhay's approach. "If Abhay had sent his opinion through proper party channels, he would have received responses. Instead, by making such a critical issue public in this manner, confusion is being created within party ranks and the revolutionary camp. The method he adopted does not help the movement but indeed harms it."

The controversy centres around slain top Maoist leader Mallojula Koteswar Rao's brother Mallojula Venugopal Rao, who operates under the aliases Abhay and Sonu. He is a member of the Central Committee and the Politburo — the party's highest bodies. Notably, Rao was a strong contender for the general secretary position, the top-ranking role in the outlawed party, alongside Thippiri Tirupathi, who was recently chosen for the position.

Unusually, Abhay, in his letter dated August 15, had also sought opinions from other Left ideologues, cadres, and those underground via email and through a Facebook group.

In his response, Jagan outlined the broader context of the conflict: "Across the country, numerous intellectuals, organisations, and prominent persons have made appeals to halt this bloodshed... Despite this, the BJP leadership has openly declared that, guided by fascist ideology and in violation of the Constitution and law, it would continue the eradication campaign at all costs."

He added: "Moreover, BJP leaders have repeatedly declared that they would not hold talks with Maoists — stating instead that Maoists must lay down arms and surrender. At this point, Comrade Sonu, a Central Committee member, announced that he was stepping away from armed struggle and requested a month's time to consult various party leaders, cadres, and sympathisers for their views, asking them to send their opinions to his personal email address."

Shinde's X account briefly hacked; Pakistan flag posted

MUMBAI, DHNS: In what comes as a shocker, Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde's account on microblogging site X was hacked briefly, with the miscreants posting images of flags of Pakistan and Turkey.

The issue, however, led to criticism from the opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi, which targeted Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, who holds the Home portfolio.

While the matter has been reported to the Cyber Crime police, the team that handles Shinde's social media managed to retrieve the X account.

Incidentally, it happened on a day when India and Pakistan were scheduled to play their second game in the cricket Asia Cup.

Meanwhile, attacking the state government, Congress leader Nana Patole said, "If the social media accounts of such important ministers in the state cannot remain secure, what about the cybersecurity of ordinary citizens? This question is surely going to trouble Maharashtra's Gen-Z generation today. The hacking of the Deputy Chief Minister's account raises serious questions about the security of the state's Home Department."

"Who will take responsibility for this? What concrete mechanisms does the government have in place for the cyber protection of citizens? The Home Department must provide clear answers to these questions," he added.

States' committed expenses rose 2.5 times in 10 yrs: CAG

NEW DELHI, PTI

The committed expenditure on salaries, pensions, and interest payments increased by 2.49 times to Rs 15,63,649 crore in fiscal 2022-23 across all states from Rs 6,26,849 crore in 2013-14, said a CAG report on state finances.

A large share of the revenue expenditure is either committed or tied up. Salaries, pensions, and interest payments on public debt and liabilities are treated as 'committed expenditure'.

During the 10-year period from 2013-14 to 2022-23, revenue expenditure by the states constituted 80-87 % of the total expenditure, and 13-15% of the combined GSDP. In FY 2022-23, revenue expenditure was 84.73% of total expenditure and 13.85% of combined GSDP, said the publication on State Finances 2022-23, the first of its kind by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India.

In FY 2022-23, of the total revenue expenditure of Rs 35,95,736 crore, the committed expenditure was Rs 15,63,649 crore; Rs 3,09,625 crore on subsidies and Rs 11,26,486 crore on grants-in-aid.

These three components, totalling Rs 29,99,760 crore together, constituted more than 83% of total revenue expenditure, according to the report, which provides an overview of the finances of 28 states for the financial year 2022-23, together with fiscal data and analysis relating to the 10-year period from FY 2013-14.

According to the report, committed expenditure on salaries, pensions and interest payments was Rs 6,26,849 crore in FY 2013-14 for all the states, which went up to Rs 15,63,649 crore in FY 2022-23.

Expenditure on subsidy, which was Rs 96,479 crore in 2013-14 for all the states, went up to Rs 3,09,625 crore in 2022-23. "Over the period 2013-14 to 2022-23, revenue expenditure increased by 2.66 times, committed expenditure increased by 2.49 times, and subsidy increased by 3.21 times," it said.

Leap of a lifetime: At 71, Kerala woman realises skydiving dream

ARJUN RAGHUNATH
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, DHNS

In an inspiring feat for elderly people, a Malayali woman has fulfilled her long-standing wish to go skydiving at the age of 71.

Leela Jose, a native of Konnathady in Idukki district, realised her dream by parasailing in Dubai last month. She is believed to be the oldest Malayali woman to attempt skydiving.

Her son, who works in Dubai, helped her fulfil this long-pending aspiration.

Leela often shared her wish to go skydiving with her family. During a visit to her son in Dubai, he asked if she was serious about it. When she said yes, he made the necessary arrangements, and Leela — accompanied by a trainer — jumped from a plane at an altitude of 13,000 feet.

'Exhilarating experience'

"The experience was truly exhilarating. At first, there was sky above and below me — I couldn't see anyone and felt as if I were flying weightlessly. Later, when we descended to around 6,000 feet and the parachutes opened, I began enjoying the views over Palm Jumeirah. At one point, I even thought I might land in the sea," she said.

Buoyed by newfound confidence, Leela has now added scuba diving to her wish list, along with the desire to try skydiving from even higher altitudes.

A homemaker, Leela began dreaming of skydiving after years of watching planes soar across the sky. Her husband PJ Jose, a cooperative bank employee, passed away a few years ago.

MISCELLANY

◆ COMICS ◆

Blondie

MR. B., HAVE YOU EVER EATEN AN ICE CREAM SANDWICH?
YOU BET I HAVE, ELMO!
HAVE YOU EVER HAD ONE MADE WITH STRAWBERRY ICE CREAM AND BANANA BREAD?
A PENNY FOR YOUR THOUGHTS, BUMSTEAD!

Hagar The Horrible

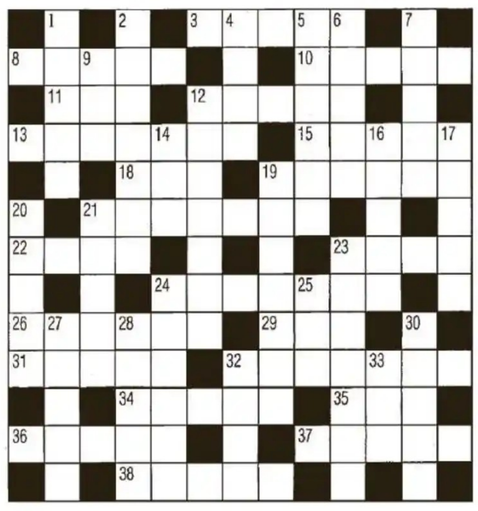
Beetle Bailey

Peanuts

NOW, IN MY REPORT, I SHALL DISCUSS VARIOUS ANIMALS SUCH AS THE ONE WE HAVE HERE...
AFTERWARDS, IF THERE ARE ANY QUESTIONS, I SHALL BE HAPPY TO ANSWER THEM
WHAT DO YOU FEED IT, FISH?
IT LOOKS LIKE A MOOSE TO ME
NAW, IT'S TOO SMALL TO BE A MOOSE...
NOT THE NOSE!

Marvin

CROSSWORD CHALLENGE 12251



CRYPTIC

ACROSS
3 This, I see, is the deep, dark problem that confronts you (5)
8 Inexplicable message? (5)
10 Route change avoiding the central part (5)
11 Was he wasted? (3)
12 Sort out a point with an impatient utterance (5)
13 He shows dad a clever wheeze (7)
15 To start picturing something to talk about (5)
18 Korean mineral? (3)
19 Finish the race with an increase in colour (6)
21 A big one might be credited with a good balance (7)
22 Is it strange in tone? (4)
23 A girlish figure (4)
24 Not ripe, perhaps, but you need it in your diet (7)
26 Free to take a girl out for the day (6)
29 A marine weapon? (3)
31 It's better to be thinner (5)
32 Girl's best friend at the baseball ground? (7)
34 French boy friend in central Bognor (5)
35 Sooner than finish nowhere! (3)
36 Paled at the possibility of having to beg (5)
37 Like a city area with less than four banks (5)
38 Cut severely! (5)

DOWN
1 A flat, if untidy, can be deadly (5)
2 Drop in and cry out there's easy money for it (3,4)
4 A hard water area (4)
5 A stout carrier (6)
6 One can learn from a trout when it's swimming (5)
7 Big Ben (5)
9 Chancy thing to do in a tube train (3)
12 Picture a railway in a beautiful setting (7)
14 Strong feeling of tiredness (3)
16 Spike with a bent point (5)
17 Playing it, is there little room for love? (5)
19 Sure to be available in a concertina arrangement (7)
20 Put out when fun's spoilt by a fathead (5)
21 It can spoil satin (5)
23 They turn down the lights (7)
24 In the army, a padre can contribute to it (6)
25 A long time, but less than a generation (3)
27 It makes the bullets go round (5)
28 He painted a Dominican head at various ages (5)
30 Go furtively to steal (5)
32 Not much money for a girl and me (4)
33 The sphere of superior benefits (3)

ACROSS
3 Heathen (5)
8 Relating to sound (5)
10 Truncheon (5)
11 Removable cover (3)
12 Rains heavily (5)
13 Nonsense, slang (7)
15 Fertile spot (5)
18 Was victorious (3)
19 Royal residence (6)
21 Referee's item (3,4)
22 Buttress (4)
23 Congeals (4)
24 Cosmetic item (7)
26 Tolerates (6)
29 Err (3)
31 Tribal badge or emblem (5)
32 Arm bone (7)
34 Spring bulb (5)
35 Knock (3)
36 Melodies (5)
37 Street urchin (5)
38 Spools (5)

DOWN
1 Grinding tooth (5)
2 Bereaved husband (7)
4 Nautical cry (4)
5 Overseas (6)
6 Of the nose (5)
7 Pick-me-up (5)
9 Nothing (3)
12 Drawing implements (7)
14 Signal agreement (3)
16 One who puts money away (5)
17 Perceive (5)
19 An exercise (5-2)
20 Wet slapping sound (5)
21 Post off (5)
23 Common (7)
24 Confuse (6)
25 That man (3)
27 Sham (5)
28 Discourage (5)
30 Student (5)
32 Tor (4)
33 Male sheep (3)

SOLUTIONS TO SUNDAY CROSSWORD 2646

CRYPTIC
ACROSS: 1 Brittle, 5 Harvest, 9 Insular, 10 Traduce, 11 Degas, 12 Early days, 13 Pot-pourri, 15 Green, 16 Roomy, 18 In silence, 21 Piecemeal, 24 Moist, 25 Tribute, 26 Tadpole, 27 Digital, 28 Soloist.

DOWN: 1 Build-up, 2 In sight, 3 Tall story, 4 Eerie, 5 Hit-or-miss, 6 Ready, 7 Emulate, 8 Treason, 14 Raise hell, 15 Gold medal, 16 Reputed, 17 Opening, 19 Nairobi, 20 Entreat, 22 Erupt, 23 Lotus.

◆SU-DO-KU-6707◆

		7	1				9	8
			2					
	6	9	7			3		
	2			4	6			
1								6
			8	9			4	
		1			7	2	8	
					3			
6	4				8	1		

hard

SOLUTION TO 6706

6	8	5	4	1	3	7	9	2
2	1	9	7	8	6	5	3	4
4	7	3	5	9	2	8	6	1
7	6	4	8	2	5	3	1	9
1	5	8	6	3	9	4	2	7
3	9	2	1	4	7	6	5	8
5	4	6	9	7	1	2	8	3
9	3	7	2	5	8	1	4	6
8	2	1	3	6	4	9	7	5

To solve the puzzle:
To solve a su-do-ku puzzle, every digit from1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows, and in each of the nine boxes.

SCRABBLE™

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							1st Letter Triple	RACK 1
E1	E1	N1	N1	R1	C3	T1		
							2nd Letter Double	RACK 2
I1	L1	V4	E1	L1	I1	Y4		
								RACK 3
O1	E1	R1	T1	F4	S1	O1		
								RACK 4
I1	I1	U1	Q10	F4	R1	F4	Double Word Score	

PAR SCORE 120-130
by JUDD

FOUR RACK TOTAL
TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

DIRECTIONS: Make a 2- to 7-letter word from the letters in each row. Add points of each word, using scoring directions at right. 7-letter words get 50-point bonus. "Blanks" used as any letter have no point value. All Judd's words are in the Collins English Dictionary. JUDD'S SOLUTION TOMORROW

SATURDAY'S SOLUTION

A1	I1	R1	P3	O1	R1	T1	RACK 1 =	68
U1	N1	C3	R1	O1	S1	S1	RACK 2 =	59
S1	E1	E1	D2	B3	E1	D2	RACK 3 =	83
H4	I1	R1	I1	N1	G2	S1	RACK 4 =	69
							JUDD'S TOTAL	279

PAR SCORE 180-190

HITORI-3161

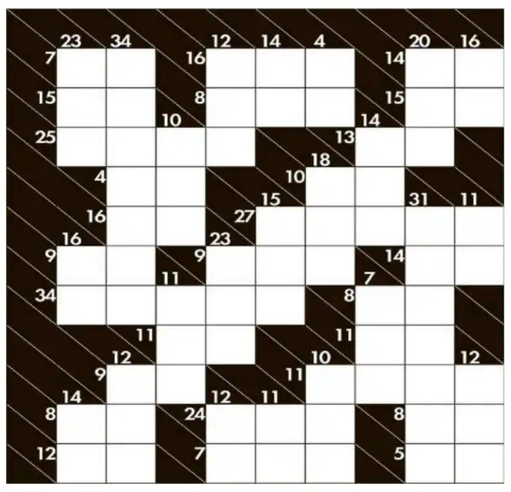
4	2	8	6	6	7	5	4
4	6	7	3	1	6	4	8
2	4	3	4	6	2	1	5
2	8	1	7	4	4	3	6
7	3	6	1	5	6	8	7
6	4	1	2	6	8	6	7
6	5	6	4	3	1	7	2
3	1	4	5	8	6	6	7

SOLUTION TO 3160

3	8	■	1	4	■	6	■
■	3	1	6	■	8	2	4
5	1	■	8	3	4	7	2
4	■	5	3	■	7	■	6
8	7	3	2	5	■	1	■
2	4	■	5	■	6	3	7
1	■	4	7	6	3	■	8
■	2	6	■	7	■	8	5

To solve the puzzle: Eliminate numbers by filling in squares so that remaining cells in that row or column do not repeat that number more than once. Filled-in cells cannot be horizontally or vertically adjacent. The un-filled cells must form a single component connected horizontally and vertically.

KAKURO- 3161



SOLUTION TO 3160

To solve the puzzle:
Put a number from 1 through 9 in a cell. No zeros. A number in a cell separated by diagonal line tells the sum of numbers in consecutive cells at its right or downward. No number may appear more than once in consecutive cells.

SU DO KU X - 3684

6					2	8	1	■
	■						■	
	5	■			3	■		
			■		■			
		3		■		5		7
		7	■		■	3	2	
		■	6	9		■	7	
	■	5	3				■	6
■						1		4

SOLUTION TO 3683

5	7	1	6	8	9	4	3	2
6	3	2	4	7	5	9	1	8
9	4	8	3	2	1	5	6	7
3	2	6	1	5	7	8	9	4
1	5	9	2	4	8	6	7	3
4	8	7	9	3	6	2	5	1
2	9	3	5	1	4	7	8	6
7	6	4	8	9	3	1	2	5
8	1	5	7	6	2	3	4	9

To solve the puzzle:
The objective is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column, each 3x3 box and each shaded diagonal line contains the same number only once.

JUMBLE®

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

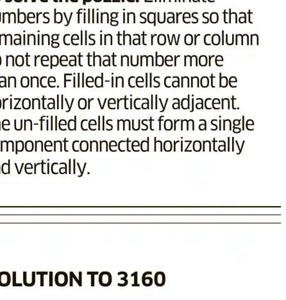
Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

REOAP

UHROM

GRLEYC

LDORAL


Thanks! You read my mind that I wanted another glass.
Would you like to try something new? I've got a great wine that I think you'd love.
I loved the first one. Sure, let's try another one.
THE NEW BARTENDER GOT TO KNOW CUSTOMERS BY ESTABLISHING A ---

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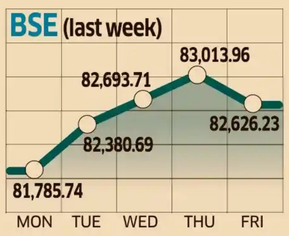
Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

"___ ___ - ___ ___ ___"

(Answers tomorrow)

Saturday's Jumbles: DRINK RHINO EXEMPT GANGLY
Answer: Their small lodging establishment was getting ready to open after years — "INN" THE MAKING

BSE (last week)



*Data as of Sep 19

TOP GAINERS		TOP LOSERS	
SBIN	4.73%	TITAN	-2.92%
ETERNAL	4.70%	ASIAN PAINTS	-2.34%
MARUTI	3.56%	ICICI BANK	-1.07%
BHARTI ARTL	3.06%	BAJ FINANCE	-1.02%
KOTAK BANK	3.95%	TATA MOTORS	-0.97%

NSE (last week)

TOP GAINERS		TOP LOSERS	
ADANI ENT	5.52%	TITAN COM	-2.93%
ETERNAL	4.71%	ASIAN PAINTS	-2.54%
SBI	4.71%	HINDALCO IND	-1.95%
MARUTI	3.52%	NESTLE INDIA	-1.90%
BHARTI ARTL	3.14%	TATA MOTORS	-1.09%

Sensex (52-week)

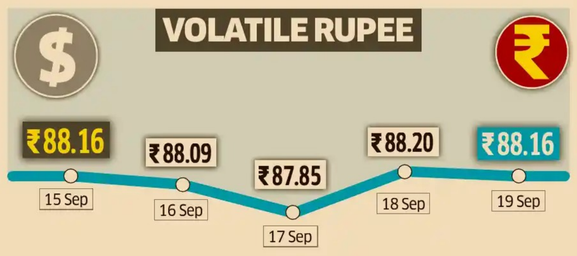
Sep 19, 2024	Sep 19, 2025	
83,184.80	82,626.23	-0.67%

Nifty (52-week)

Sep 19, 2024	Sep 19, 2025	
25,415.80	25,327.05	-0.35%

10-year Bond yield 6.48%

VOLATILE RUPEE



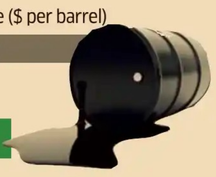
Exchange Rates*

Dollar	₹88.16	SGD	₹68.82
Pound	₹119.25	Yen (100 units)	₹59.78
Euro	₹103.93		

*Price at which banks sell

Crude Oil Rate ($ per barrel)

BRENT CRUDE
$66.68*
-1.13%
*Rate as of Sep 20



Bengaluru fuel pump price*

(Retail)
Petrol* ₹102.92 ₹0%
Diesel* ₹90.99 ₹0%

*Rates as of Sep 20 #Rate change compared with yesterday

Commodity watch

COFFEE

Category	Rate (Rs per 50 kg)*
Arabica Parchment	₹26500 - 27200
Arabica Cherry	₹14000 - 15700
Robusta Parchment	₹17000 - 17800
Robusta Cherry	₹10800 - 11750

*Rates as on Sep 19

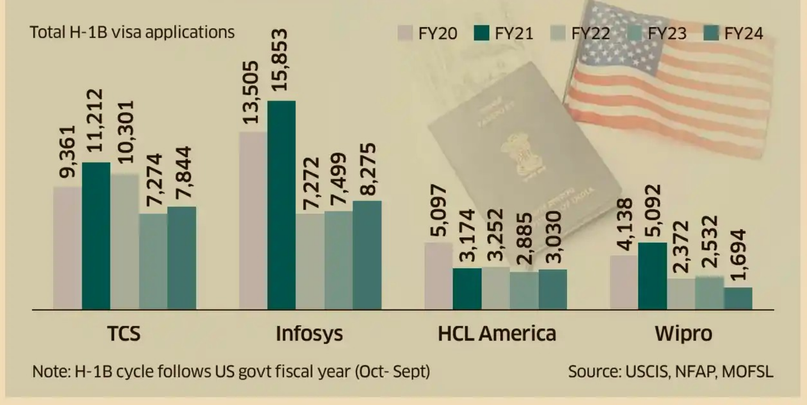
Other Commodities

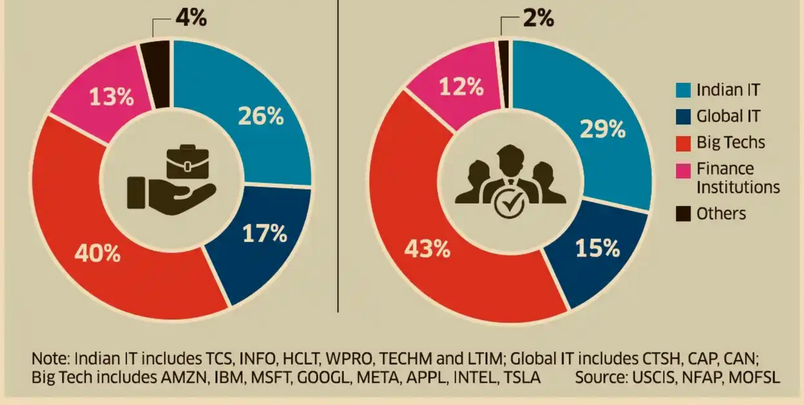
Silkworm cocoon (Rs per kg)*

Bivoltine (BV)	₹686
Cross Breed (CB)	₹608

*Average rates as on Sep 19

'Indian IT companies will avoid new H-1B filings altogether'


TOP INDIAN IT VENDORS HAVE REDUCED THEIR RELIANCE ON H-1B VISAS
Total H-1B visa applications
FY20 FY21 FY22 FY23 FY24
9,361 11,212 10,301 7,274 7,844
13,505 15,853 7,272 7,499 8,275
5,097 3,174 3,252 2,885 3,030
4,138 5,092 2,372 2,532 1,694
TCS
Infosys
HCL America
Wipro
Note: H-1B cycle follows US govt fiscal year (Oct- Sept)
Source: USCIS, NFAP, MOFSL



The $100K fee will start to impact from FY27

UMA KANNAN
BENGALURU, DHNS

Indian IT services companies may steer clear of new H-1B filings from next fiscal year as these companies need to spend $1,00,000 per petition.

Motilal Oswal Financial Services in its 'Technology' sector update, released on Sunday said visa applications for FY26 are already locked in and that the $100k fee will start to impact from FY27 onwards.

"If an IT company were to apply for 5,000 H-1Bs in FY27, the annual fee alone would amount to $500 million (5,000 × $100k). Given the magnitude of this fee, it is likely that Indian IT companies will avoid new H-1B filings altogether, opting instead to expand offshore delivery or increase local hiring," the report said.

It added that big tech companies such as Google, Amazon, Microsoft and Meta account for a larger share of fresh H-1B applications than Indian IT companies.

Indian IT services firms have been reducing their reliance on H-1B visas from FY21. From 11,212 H-1B visa applications, the country's largest IT services firm Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) has reduced its reliance to 7,844 in FY24. Infosys too reduced its dependence on H-1B visas from 15,853 applications to a little over 8,200 in FY24. From 5,092 applications in FY20, Wipro reduced it to 1,694 in FY24.

"If new H-1Bs vanish, on-site revenues will decline, but so do on-site costs. This shift could improve operating margins, as offshore work tends to be structurally more profitable," said Motilal Oswal in its report.

It added that only 20% of employees are currently based on-site and of this, 20–30% are on H-1B visas. This means H-1B holders represent only 3–5% of the active workforce for a typical vendor.

During the Q3 FY25 earnings press conference in January this year, top IT companies said their dependency on H-1B is limited.

Infosys CFO Jayesh Sanghrajka had said that over the years, the company's dependence on H-1B visas has reduced significantly.

He had said that the company's onsite mix reduced significantly. Earlier it used to be in the 30% range but the range is now at about 24%. "Within that, our near shore has increased significantly," he said.

In 2021, Nasscom and S&P Global in a report stated that the Indian tech industry has employed 207,000 people in the US with an average wage of $106,360.

Though the $100k fee applies only to new peitions, and not to techies living and working in the US, it has created widespread panic and frustration among them.

Lavanya A, a techie in California, said that they are clueless with no clarity. "I thought about switching companies but I won't do that now and we need to wait to seek more clarity," she said.

Meanwhile, the White House released a fact sheet saying that the share of IT workers with H-1B visas has risen from 32% in FY 2003 to over 65% in recent years. It said American companies are laying off their American technology workers and seemingly replacing them with H-1B workers. It pointed out that one company was approved for 5,189 H-1B workers in FY 2025, while laying off roughly 16,000 US employees this year.

More GCCs may scale up

The move to increase H-1B visa fees to $1,00,000 might turn out to be a blessing in disguise for Global Capability Centres (GCCs). According to industry experts, top CEOs of MNCs might start looking to expand GCC operations in India as the country has a huge talent base in emerging technologies.

In the last few months, many IT companies have started focusing on GCCs by appointing a separate head to lead the company's GCC capabilities.

"IT services companies may get more aggressive on GCC in the home front which means pricing may drop for GCCs for talent and staffing. But MNCs in the US will have to increase offshoring to IT services and we think GCCs will see a spike," Kamal Karanth, Co-founder, Xpheno, a specialist staffing firm said.

He added that more GCCs may scale up or greenfield GCCs may increase in the country.

At present, the country has over 1,800 GCCs, and this is likely to touch 2,400 by 2030.

ANSR, which helps organisations design, build, manage and operate GCCs, in a recent report said 67% of the Fortune Global 30 and over one-third of the entire Fortune Global 500 now run GCCs in India.

GST reforms, rate cut kick in from today

From daily essentials to cars and electronics get cheaper

GYANENDRA KESHRI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The country's indirect tax structure will undergo a significant revamp from Monday with introduction of the second generation of the goods and services tax (GST 2.0) system, making essential and mass-market products cheaper while pushing up the prices of ultra-luxury and sin goods.

From the first day of Navratri festival, the GST moves to a two-tier structure, where the majority of goods and services will fall either under 5% or 18% tax slabs or attract no tax. The 12% and 28% GST tax slabs have been scrapped. However, a special 40% GST rate also kicks in. It will apply ultra luxury products and sin goods like pan masala, cigarettes, aerated water with added sugar and carbonated beverages.

Auto sector is among the biggest beneficiaries. Duties on small cars have been cut to 18% from earlier 28% plus surcharge. Even the luxury cars that are to be taxed at 40% have witnessed price reduction due to the scrapping of cess. Most automakers including Maruti Suzuki, Tata Motors, Mahindra and Hyundai have announced significant reduction in vehicle price.

Leading FMCG firms like Hindustan Unilever, Procter & Gamble and Emami have also announced significant cut in prices of daily-use items like toilet soaps, hair oil, shampoo, toothpaste, toothbrush, razors, after-shave lotions and baby diapers. The GST on these items has been cut to 5% from earlier 12/18%.

The mass consumption items like ghee, paneer, butter, 'namkeen', ketchup, jam, dry fruits, coffee and ice creams will also witness significant drop in prices.

While the companies have announced reduction in prices with effect from September 22, it may take months to be reflected in the price tags of the items. The old maximum retail price (MRP) tag can continue to be used until March 31, 2026, or until existing stock is exhausted.

However, the Department of Consumer Affairs has directed companies and retailers to ensure that the correct revised MRP is communicated and displayed through stickers, stamping, or online printing at any place on the package.

The Department of Consumer Affairs has introduced a new GST grievance redressal facility on the National Consumer Helpline (NCH), giving consumers a direct channel to report issues related to revised GST rates, billing, and exemptions.

According to an analysis conducted jointly by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) and the Thought Arbitrage Research Institute (TARI), there will be either nil or 5% GST on more than 75% of the items rural Indians spend money on, while for urban Indians this proportion will be 66%.

This move is expected to significantly boost consumption especially during the festive seasons of Navratri and Diwali.

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said the GST rate cut would put around Rs 2 lakh crore in the hands of the people, which will help boost consumption and accelerate economic growth.

The decisions regarding GST reforms and rate cut were taken by the GST Council at its meeting held on September 3. Apart from the rate cuts the Council has also approved structural reforms in the system to make doing business easier.

For businesses, especially MSMEs, GST 2.0 introduces rationalised rates that address distortions caused by the inverted duty structure.

Sectors critical for rural employment and manufacturing—such as tractors, farm machinery, fertilizers, textiles, handicrafts, auto components, and construction inputs—are now subject to lower, more rational rates, FICCI-TARI report said.

"These reforms are among the most revolutionary tax transformations in independent India, aimed at empowering small traders, enhancing consumer confidence, and advancing the nation's economy towards the $10 trillion mark," said Praveen Khandelwal, National Secretary General, Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT).

Khandelwal said the CAIT has advised all trade associations across the country to ensure that the benefit of the GST rate cut is passed on to consumers both in letter and in spirit.

GST dip adds cheer to festive shopping; festive hiring up 20-25%

UMA KANNAN
BENGALURU, DHNS

As e-commerce giants Amazon and Flipkart kick off their festive sales on Tuesday (September 23), the demand for gig workers, especially in logistics and retail sectors, is expected to spiral up and recruitment firms are gearing up to meet strong sales.

Redseer's latest analysis revealed that e-commerce sales during the 30–35 days leading up to Diwali are projected to cross Rs 1.15 lakh crore GMV (gross merchandise value), growing 20–25% y-o-y and nearly double that of last year's pace. It also said that this would be the best in the last five years.

Walmart-owned e-commerce company Flipkart and Amazon together have created over 3.7 lakh job opportunities this festive season. Myntra has created more than 11,000 job opportunities through its partners with about 30% of the additional warehouse workforce comprising women. The new roles span logistics, customer service, and last-mile operations across Bengaluru, Mumbai, Kolkata, and Delhi, the company said. E-tailer Meesho alone will create 12 lakh jobs ahead of the festive season. The roles will largely involve first-mile, middle-mile, and delivery associates, responsible for duties such as picking, sorting, loading, unloading, and handling returns.

Kolhapur foundries pilot decarbonisation

MUMBAI, DHNS: The Kolhapur Foundry Cluster, one of India's largest hubs for automotive and engineering castings, has begun taking crucial steps towards sustainability with the launch of a first-of-its-kind collaborative decarbonisation model. The initiative seeks to transform over 300 foundry units, aiming to be one of India's leading green MSME hubs while enhancing their competitiveness in domestic and international markets.

A report titled — "Forging a greener future together: Decarbonising Kolhapur's foundries one step at a time" — documented a first-of-its-kind roadmap for transitioning MSME foundries towards low-carbon growth.

INFAMY TO INDUSTRY

Gadchiroli's transformation as India's biggest steel hub gathers steam

MRITYUNJAY BOSE
MUMBAI, DHNS

Once a Naxal stronghold, Gadchiroli is fast transforming into a steel hub, with committed investments of Rs 1.60 lakh crore and nearly 50,000 jobs. More investments are in the pipeline.

The lion's share of investment is by JSW Steel with a whopping Rs 1 lakh crore in the next seven to eight years for a steel plant. Through green steel production, Gadchiroli is set to create steel that's not only of higher quality than China's, but also more affordable.

Left Wing Extremism (LWE) will be a thing of the past - given the fact that people, which comprises a largely tribal population, have given thumbs up to development - and in the 2024 elections, record voting of 72.68% was reported.

"Ten years down the line, Gadchiroli would be a different district buzzing with development," informed sources said, adding that the 'jal, jungle, zameen' rights of the adivasi community will not be disturbed. Over decades, Gadchiroli — located in the Vidarbha region of Maharashtra — would emerge bigger than Jamshedpur, also known as Tatanagar, the steel city of mine-rich Jharkhand, they said.

In fact, the Gadchiroli district, rich in natural resources and forest produce, is part of the ancient region of Dandakaranya. The Centre and the Maharashtra government is giving a major push to the industrialisation in the tribal district of Gadchiroli, which was once affected by Maoism. The district is used by CPI (Maoist) cadres as a transit point between Chhattisgarh and Telangana.

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, who is the state Home Minister and Law & Judiciary Minister, is also the Guardian Minister of the Gadchiroli district.

"Gadchiroli will emerge as one of the best districts. Naxalism is shrinking in Gadchiroli, and very few Naxalites, who can be counted on fingers, are left in the forests here.... even former Naxals are working here...the Naxal network has been broken, only a few remain, and they too must surrender...people are for development," Fadnavis, who had celebrated the New Year Day and his 55th birthday on 22 July in Gadchiroli, said recently. "Entire steel ecosystem is being created," he added.

Maharashtra CM Devendra Fadnavis in Gadchiroli.

While JSW Steel is investing Rs 1 lakh crore for developing a steel plant, Lloyds Metal and Steel is planning to invest Rs 40,000 crore beyond the Rs 5,000 crore already invested. Sumedh Tools Pvt. Ltd has signed MoU for Rs 2,000 crore investment while Hariom Pipes will come in with Rs 3,135 crore investment.

During the inauguration of ATIFA Steelex 2025, last week, Fadnavis said Maharashtra would not only lead in steel production but also play a key role in India's Green Steel Mission, in line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision. "When the PM signed the Paris Agreement, many believed it was an impossible goal. But India has met its climate commitments ahead of schedule, showing the world our resolve," he said.

Education facilities too being revamped

Jobs will require a trained workforce - and the primary to higher education sector is being boosted. Under a unique initiative - 'ek gaon, ek granthalaya' ('One Village, One Library') - in the last over two years, 71 libraries are now functional - where over 8,000 students enrolled. In the last two and a half years, 205 of these young individuals have been selected for the Police force, and many others have secured jobs in the revenue department and other jobs in the government.

MoUs were signed between the Gondwana University Gadchiroli and the Lloyds Metals and Energy and the Curtin University in Western Australia. One MoU was signed between the Gondwana University and Lloyds Metals to establish an autonomous 'University Institute of Technology' in Gadchiroli for offering Engineering programmes to the students. The second MoU was signed between the Gondwana University and Curtin University in Western Australia for degree courses.

The Gadchiroli Police Skilling Institute is revolutionising the lives of tribal youth in Naxal-affected villages by providing training in cutting-edge technologies like Artificial Intelligence (AI), software development

Mahindra Tractors has entered into an agreement with the Maharashtra government to establish a Skill Development Centre in Gadchiroli. This agreement was signed between Mahindra Tractors, Department of Vocational Education & Training (DVET) and Maharashtra State Skill Development Society (MSSDS) aimed at promoting skill development among rural youth in Gadchiroli. It focuses on equipping them with industry-ready skills while also boosting local livelihoods.

The action

The Gadchiroli district is part of the Red Corridor, which once experienced high degree Naxalite-Maoist insurgency. Naxalites from the People's Liberation Guerrilla Army (PLGA) took shelter in the dense forests and hills of this district.

"Over the years, the outlawed Maoists have used Gadchiroli district as an "oscillating point" between the Bastar region of Chhattisgarh and Telangana, which has been carved out of Andhra Pradesh. The Left Wing Extremism has taken a toll in this remote district, that borders Chandrapur and Gondia in Vidarbha region," said an official of the State Intelligence Department (SID), however, now things are changing.

The Gadchiroli police, the elite C60 commando team of the Anti-Naxalite Operation (ANO) and Commando Battalion for Resolute Action (COBRA) of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), have constantly mounted pressure on the outlaws.

However, with over 100-plus CPI (Maoist) commanders and cadres being killed in encounters with police and regular intelligence-based operations have stepped up the heat on them in the last eight to 10 years dealing a body blow to the Naxalites.

Besides, over a decade's time, hundreds of outlaws have surrendered and they have been rehabilitated.

TOP PICKS

The data is sourced from Motilal Oswal Financial Services Limited

Punjab National Bank
(ID: PNB)
BUY
Upside +15%**
Last close ₹113
Target: ₹130*

Larsen & Toubro
(ID: LT)
BUY
Upside +14%**
Last close ₹3,672
Target: ₹4,200*

Hindustan Unilever
(ID: HINDUNILVR)
BUY
Upside +19%**
Last close ₹2,560
Target: ₹3,050*

Aditya Birla Capital
(ID: ABCAPITAL)
BUY
Upside +18%**
Last close ₹289
Target: ₹340*

M&M
(ID: M&M)
BUY
Upside +15%**
Last close ₹3,592
Target: ₹4,145*

* Target price has been calculated on the basis of fundamentals ** Upside refers to more value stock is expected to generate than its current price

Things to know before you invest in Bitcoin or Ethereum

Investors these days, be it seasoned institutions to curious first-time participants, ask this one question: 'Should I invest in Bitcoin or Ethereum? The short answer is yes, but with the right context. These two assets dominate the digital economy, together accounting for nearly two-thirds of the global crypto market cap. Yet, they are fundamentally different in purpose, risk, and long-term value creation. For anyone considering their first step into digital assets, here are the key principles that matter most.

1. Bitcoin, Ethereum play distinct roles

Bitcoin, launched in 2009. It was the first successful decentralised digital currency. It is designed on scarcity, that means only 21 million coins will ever exist. This fixed supply makes it similar to gold, and so it is called "digital gold." For many, it is a hedge against inflation and a way to diversify beyond traditional currencies.

On the other hand, Ethereum was introduced in 2015, and is fundamentally built differently. While it also has a native currency (ETH) like Bitcoin, its primary purpose is to enable smart contracts and decentralised applications (dApps). Developers use Ethereum to build platforms like Uniswap (a decentralised exchange) and OpenSea (an NFT marketplace). This positions Ethereum as the backbone of the decentralised internet.

2. Volatility

Price fluctuations are inherent to all asset classes, but cryptocurrencies experience them more sharply. Bitcoin, for instance, climbed to an all-time high of $69,000 in late 2021, dropped below $20,000 in 2022, and later surpassed $113,000 in 2025. Ethereum mirrored this pattern, rising to nearly $4,800 before falling to around $900, and has since staged a strong recovery.

For investors, this volatility is both a risk and an opportunity. Those who entered during downturns often benefited significantly over the long run, but short-term investors who entered at market peaks faced steep losses.

3. Regulations

Policy developments are central to the growth of Bitcoin and Ethereum. Clear regulations provide confidence to institutional investors, while uncertainty tends to limit participation.

EDUL PATEL
CO-FOUNDER, CEO OF MUDREX

In the United States, the approval of spot Bitcoin ETFs in 2024 allowed pension funds, family offices, and retail investors to access Bitcoin through regulated products.

In India, which leads the world in grassroots adoption for three consecutive years (2023–2025), regulations remain evolving. A 30% flat tax on gains and no provision to offset losses make investing less favorable compared to equities.

These policy environments are not just background noise they directly affect returns, liquidity, and access.

4. Make them part of a diversified portfolio

One of the most common mistakes new investors make is concentrating too heavily in crypto. While Bitcoin and Ethereum dominate the sector, they should be seen as part of a balanced investment strategy.

Adding 2–5% exposure to crypto or Bitcoin improves overall portfolio performance without significantly increasing risk. Beyond this range, volatility can overwhelm diversification benefits.

5. Use a long-term lens

Bitcoin has now existed for over 15 years, surviving multiple crashes and proving its resilience. Ethereum, meanwhile, has evolved significantly most notably with its transition to Proof-of-Stake (Ethereum 2.0), which reduced energy usage by nearly 99.9% and introduced staking rewards averaging 3–6% annually.

Long-term investors who held through cycles have historically been rewarded. Glassnode data shows that the number of Bitcoin wallets holding coins for more than two years is at record highs, reflecting strong conviction in its future value.

Closing perspective

Bitcoin and Ethereum are being integrated into traditional finance, with giant banks getting into this space. Yet, they are not without risks. They remain volatile, regulation is evolving, and custody requires vigilance.

FPIs take out Rs 7,945 cr from equities in Sept

NEW DELHI, PTI: Foreign investors have pulled out Rs 7,945 crore from Indian equities so far in September, weighed down by global uncertainties such as tariffs and persistent geopolitical tensions.

This follows heavy outflows of Rs 34,990 crore in August and Rs 17,700 crore in July, taking the total equity sell-off by Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) in 2025 to Rs 1.38 lakh crore, according to depository data.

Looking ahead, market experts believe that upcoming macroeconomic data from India and the US, along with progress in tariff negotiations, will be key drivers of FPI flows in the coming week.

Although FPIs remain net sellers in September, with cumulative equity outflows of Rs 7,945 crore till September 19, their selling has moderated. In fact, during the latest week, they briefly turned net buyers, purchasing Rs 900 crore of equities after the US Federal Reserve cut interest rates by 25 basis points.

"For the current week FPIs bought Indian equities worth Rs 900 crore on the back of the Fed's rate cut. With two more cuts projected in 2025, liquidity in global markets could improve significantly. However, FPIs remain net sellers in September," said Vaqarjaved Khan, Senior Fundamental Analyst, Angel One Ltd.

Himanshu Srivastava, Principal, Manager Research, Morningstar Investment Research India, noted that foreign investors made a "modest but noticeable return" to Indian equities during the week. He said the Fed's dovish stance, coupled with easing US-India trade frictions and India's stable macroeconomic outlook, lifted sentiment.

Mcap of 7 of 10 most valued firms jumps by Rs 1.18L crore

NEW DELHI PTI: The combined market valuation of seven of the top-10 most valued firms jumped by Rs 1,18,328.29 crore last week, with State Bank of India and Bharti Airtel emerging as the biggest gainers, amid an optimistic trend in equities.

Last week, the BSE benchmark surged 721.53 points or 0.88%.

While Reliance Industries, HDFC Bank, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), Bharti Airtel, State Bank of India, Infosys and Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) were the winners, ICICI Bank, Bajaj Finance and Hindustan Unilever emerged as the laggards.

The market valuation of State Bank of India jumped Rs 35,953.25 crore to Rs 7,95,910 crore.

Bharti Airtel added Rs 33,214.77 crore taking its valuation to Rs 11,18,952.64 crore.

The market capitalisation (mcap) of Reliance Industries zoomed Rs 17,389.23 crore to Rs 19,04,898.51 crore and that of TCS surged by Rs 12,952.75 crore to Rs 11,46,879.47 crore.

LIC's valuation edged higher by Rs 12,460.25 crore to Rs 5,65,612.92 crore and that of Infosys climbed Rs 6,127.73 crore to Rs 6,39,901.03 crore.

The mcap of HDFC Bank went up by Rs 230.31 crore to Rs 14,84,816.26 crore.

However, the market valuation of ICICI Bank declined by Rs 10,707.87 crore to Rs 10,01,654.46 crore. The mcap of Bajaj Finance eroded by Rs 6,346.93 crore to Rs 6,17,892.72 crore and that of Hindustan Unilever dipped by Rs 5,039.87 crore.

Can mid & small caps reduce portfolio risk?

In shorter periods, the volatility of the Nifty 500 has been higher than that of the Nifty 50

CHETAN KUKREJA

The core objective of a risk-averse investor is often to earn reasonable returns while keeping risk low. Many are comfortable with slightly lower returns if their portfolio remains stable during uncertain times, prioritising capital protection over high gains.

One key way to measure risk is through standard deviation (volatility), which shows how much returns have fluctuated in the past. For instance, the Nifty 50 had a volatility of around 13.5% indicating fluctuations within approximately ±13.5% during that period. There's no ideal volatility number—it depends on each investor's risk tolerance.

For perspective, the Nifty India Defence Index had volatility over 32% during the same period, still saw investor participation. This shows that volatility alone doesn't determine a fund's quality, but it remains crucial for those seeking consistency and downside protection.

Index volatility numbers

What happens if an investor, who already holds a core portfolio in large caps like the Nifty 50, wants to get some exposure to mid and small caps—while aiming to manage overall portfolio risk? The Nifty 500 Index includes the top 500 listed companies in India across large, mid, and small cap segments. Roughly, the index has about 70% weight in large caps, 20% in mid-caps, and 10% in small caps.

In shorter time periods, the volatility or standard deviation of the Nifty 500 has been higher than that of the Nifty 50. For instance, over the last one year, the Nifty 500 had a volatility of around 14.9%, which is 1.4% higher than the Nifty 50. However, over longer timeframes—say, 7 years and beyond—the situation actually reverses.

Over the last 15 years, the Nifty 500 has shown slightly lower volatility than the Nifty 50. While Nifty 50's annualised volatility stands at 16.6%, the Nifty 500 comes in at 16.3%t. The difference may seem small, but it is still notable considering the broader index includes mid and small cap stocks.

Correlation effect

When investors think of mid and small caps, the common belief is that they increase portfolio risk. However, over longer periods, historical data shows this hasn't always been true. It's not just diversification at work – correlation also plays a big role in portfolio behaviour.

Nifty 50 stocks often move in tandem, especially during sharp market swings. Over the past 20 years, the correlation between Nifty 50 and Nifty Next 50 has been about 0.87, meaning they largely rise and fall together.

As we move to smaller segments, this correlation has historically tended to decline. Mid-caps show a correlation of around 0.84 with Nifty 50, and small caps drop further to 0.77. Microcaps, which fall outside the Nifty 500, typically have even lower correlation, as they move more independently and are influenced by stock- or sector-specific factors.

Since all stocks don't move in the same direction or intensity, their combined effect helps in creating balance.

Risk in crisis periods

Panic-driven markets tend to spike volatility as investors rush to buy or sell at distorted prices. During such periods, the Nifty 50 often reacts more sharply than the broader Nifty 500.

Historically, the Nifty 50 has shown higher volatility during extreme crises.This is because Nifty 50 companies are more globally connected and heavily held by foreign investors, making them more sensitive to global shocks and capital outflows.

However, in relatively calm phases, the trend sometimes reverses. The Nifty 500 can show higher volatility, driven by greater investor interest in mid and small caps. As market sentiment improves, investors take on more risk and diversify into the broader market, increasing trading volumes and price movements in these segments.

Sector tilt

The sectors an index is exposed to can significantly impact its overall volatility. Some sectors are known to be aggressive and highly sensitive to market cycles, while others are more defensive and stable in nature.

The Nifty 50 has a higher weight in financial services, energy, and information technology, which are among the most volatile sectors based on 10-year historical data. Each of these sectors has had an annualised volatility of around 21%. On the other hand, the index is underweight in healthcare, services, and consumer discretionary, all of which have shown relatively lower volatility, ranging between 16-18%. This sectoral skew contributes to the higher volatility of the Nifty 50 over the long term.

Index Annualised Volatility
(Standard Deviation)

Period	Nifty 50 TR Index	Nifty 500 TR Index
1 Year	13.52%	14.90%
3 Year	12.67%	13.43%
5 Year	14.57%	14.84%
7 Year	17.77%	17.53%
10 Year	16.48%	16.40%
15 Year	16.57%	16.30%

Sectors	Volatility (10y)	Excess weight of Nifty 50 over Nifty 500
Financial Services	21%	6%
Energy	21%	2%
Information Technology	21%	3%
Commodities	20%	-2%
Healthcare	18%	-3%
Services	18%	-1%
Fast Moving Consumer Goods	16%	0%
Consumer Discretionary	16%	-3%

Source: NSE, MO AMC, Data as of 30th June 2025

Meanwhile, the broader Nifty 500 spreads its exposure across a wider base, including sectors that offer more resilience during market corrections.

Recent trends

Although historical data suggests that the Nifty 500 has exhibited lower volatility than the Nifty 50 over the long term, it's important to acknowledge the recent shift in trend. In the last few years, the volatility of the Nifty 500 — especially over shorter timeframes — has started to rise noticeably.

This is not unusual in a fast-growing economy like India. In high growth or emerging markets, capital flows tend to chase growth-oriented businesses, many of which lie outside the mature large cap space. As a result, mid and small cap stocks — which form a significant portion of the Nifty 500 — have historically experienced sharp price movements when there is heightened investor activity or increased trading volumes.

Conclusion

Volatility is not driven by a single factor. It is influenced by a combination of elements such as index concentration, sector exposure, foreign investor participation, correlation among stocks, and broader macroeconomic cycles.

(The writer is Head of Research, Passive Business, Motilal Oswal AMC)

THE WEEK AHEAD

Markets to stay firm, with a positive bias

Demand pick up - a prime driver, with some focus on macro data from India & the US

SIDDHARTHA KHEMKA

This week, equity markets are likely to stay firm with a positive bias, aided by a potential consumption boost as the GST rate cuts become effective from September 22 along with Navratri festivities beginning from the same day, which should further push demand. Sentiment in export-oriented sectors is also likely to improve, supported by the US Fed's recent rate cut and encouraging progress in the India–US trade talks.

On the macro front, investors will closely track India's manufacturing and services PMI, along with key US data including the Q2 GDP and retail inflation for August.

The primary market is buzzing with activity, with 22 IPOs (8 mainboard and 14 SME) set to open this week, aiming to raise nearly Rs5,000 crore. This IPO rush highlights strong retail interest, steady institutional participation and buoyant secondary market sentiment.

Last week, Nifty50 advanced 218 points to close at 25,327 (+1.5%), its third consecutive week of gains. The broader markets outperformed, with Nifty Midcap100 and Nifty Smallcap100 rising 1.5% and 2.8% respectively.

Sectorally, PSU Bank index was the top gainer, up 4.8%, on the back of clarification from finance ministry that there was no proposal to reduce the government's stake in PSU banks below 51%. IT and pharma indices gained 1.5% each, following resumption of US-India trade negotiations.

On the global front, the US Federal Reserve delivered its first rate cut of the year, and also signalled the likelihood of two more cuts before year-end. A softer dollar is expected to aid INR stability, curb import inflation, and lift investor sentiment. Overall, Fed easing enhances global liquidity, reduces macro headwinds, and provides a supportive backdrop for Indian equities.

Domestically, defence stocks continue to be in focus, supported by strong policy momentum and project visibility. Defence exports hit a record Rs 236 billion in FY25 (+12% YoY) and are expected to double over the next 2–3 years.

In the auto sector, the GST rate-cuts have provided a much-needed boost by reducing the tax rates on the majority of auto segments to 18% from 28% earlier. On the back of demand pick-up and better earnings growth prospects, we reiterate a positive outlook on the sector.

The BFSI sector remains resilient despite macro and regulatory headwinds, driven by diversified growth across banking, non-banking finance, insurance, and capital markets. Going ahead, we expect the performance of banking stocks to improve with an impending recovery in earnings.

Overall, the confluence of domestic policy support, festive-driven consumption tailwinds, and global liquidity easing sets a constructive tone for Indian equities in the near term.

(The writer is Head of Research, Wealth Management, Motilal Oswal Financial Services Ltd)

Festive shopping with lighter GST to bring cheer.

DATA DASH

Equinix open to expanding operations in more Indian cities

E.T.B. SIVAPRIYAN
CHENNAI, DHNS

California-based digital infrastructure company Equinix opened its first data centre in Chennai last week – its second in India after Mumbai. The company is also open to expanding its operations to other cities such as Bengaluru, New Delhi, and Hyderabad, as it continues to monitor demands from its customers across the country, Manoj Paul, Managing Director, India of Equinix Inc, told *DH.*

The company chose Mumbai and Chennai not just because of several submarine data cables landing in the two cities, but also because of massive consumer demand for data centers in India, he informed. In a conversation with *DH*, he added that Phase I of the Chennai facility, which has been built at a cost of Rs 608 crore ($69 million) over two years, will boast 800 cabinets – a number that will eventually expand to 4,200 cabinets over the next four to five years.

"Our customers will start occupying the space in the next few weeks, and, in fact, we came to India due to high demand from our customers. It will take about four to five years for us to complete all four phases, but it all depends on customer demand. If it is faster, then we will deploy it faster," Paul said.

Equinix India, MD, Manoj Paul

The data centre, which has been built on six acres of land at an industrial estate owned by the State Industries Promotion Corporation of India (SIPCOT) in Siruseri, is engineered for a high reliability of 99.999% uptime and features a full suite of Equinix interconnection services, including Equinix Fabric, which enables enterprises to leverage the full benefits of hybrid, multi-cloud services.

Paul said the centre's advanced design also enables support for liquid cooling technology, which is essential for handling the high-density, compute-intensive workloads that are driving AI and other transformative technologies.

When asked whether the company chose Chennai because of the huge bandwidth the city boasts, Paul said the company wanted to be somewhere in South India, which includes large economies like Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and Andhra Pradesh.

"Our customers have deployments in Mumbai and Chennai, and they connect globally through our office. Many of our customers are based in Chennai and wanted us to be here. The initial occupants at this new facility will be our customers from Chennai and across the globe," he added.

On expansion plans he said, "We came to India in the first place because we had massive customer demand here. We are in close interaction with our customers, and we are seeing interest in some places. We are trying to validate the requirements. The thing is, we are constantly monitoring our customers' interest."

Equinix, whose customers include the majority of Fortune 500 companies and almost all major OTT platforms, is also focusing heavily on the demand that AI will create for data centers. With India set to be one of the biggest markets for companies like ChatGPT, Paul said the company is closely following the demand for AI and sees demand varying from region to region.

"We are closely monitoring the demand growth, and we are fully prepared for any customer requirements. Our data centers are fully AI-enabled, and we can build specialised systems for customers based on their needs. Our experience serving similar requests worldwide and our established partnerships means that we have solutions in place," he said.

Paul also added that the company has a very close partnership with NVIDIA, and they keep a constant watch on emerging demand trends. "We are fully equipped to support AI-enabled requirements in both Mumbai and Chennai, with rapid deployment possible within existing capacities," he added.

UK, Oz & Canada recognise Palestinian state

Netanyahu denounces statehood moves, vows it will not happen

LONDON, AFP

Smoke rises following an Israeli strike amid an Israeli operation, as seen from central Gaza Strip, on Sunday. REUTERS

Britain, Australia and Canada on Sunday recognised a Palestinian state in a coordinated, historic shift in decades of Western foreign policy, triggering swift anger from Israel.

Portugal was also set to recognise Palestinian statehood later Sunday, with other countries, including France, due to follow Monday at the annual UN General Assembly opening in New York.

Israel has come under huge international pressure over its war against Hamas in Gaza launched in the wake of the October 7, 2023 militant attack, which has sparked a dire humanitarian crisis in the Palestinian territory.

Israeli leader Benjamin Netanyahu denounced the statehood moves and vowed "it will not happen. No Palestinian state will be established west of the Jordan River."

He slammed the move as "absurd" and said it would "endanger" Israel's existence, later vowing to expand Jewish settlements in the Israeli-occupied West Bank.

Netanyahu spoke after UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer said Britain was formally recognising the State of Palestine "to revive the hope of peace for the Palestinians and Israelis, and a two-state solution".

The UK and Canada became the first members of the Group of Seven advanced economies to take the step, with Australia following suit.

Three-quarters of UN members now recognise Palestinian statehood, with at least 144 of the 193 member countries having taken the step, according to an AFP tally.

Canada "offers our partnership in building the promise of a peaceful future", Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney wrote on X.

Australia's Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said the move "recognises the legitimate and long held aspirations of the people of Palestine to a state of their own".

Abbas hails recognition

Palestinian president Mahmud Abbas hailed the recognitions as "an important and necessary step toward achieving a just and lasting peace".

It is a watershed moment for Palestinians and their ambitions for statehood, with the most powerful Western nations having long argued it should only come as part of a negotiated peace deal with Israel.

Although a largely symbolic move, it puts those countries at odds with the United States and Israel.

US President Donald Trump said last week after talks with Starmer during a state visit to the UK that "one of our few disagreements" was over Palestinian statehood.

And French President Emmanuel Macron insisted in an interview with a US television network that releasing the hostages captured in 2023 would be "a requirement very clearly before opening, for instance, an embassy in Palestine".

A growing number of longtime Israeli allies have shifted their long-held positions as Israel has intensified its Gaza offensive, which began almost two years ago with Hamas's 2023 attack.

The Gaza Strip has suffered vast destruction, with a growing international outcry over the besieged coastal territory's spiralling death toll and a UN-declared famine.

The UK government has come under increasing public pressure to act, with thousands of people rallying every month on the streets. A poll released by YouGov on Friday showed two-thirds of British people aged 18-25 supported Palestinian statehood.

Deputy Prime Minister David Lammy had said at the United Nations in July that "Britain bears a special burden of responsibility to support the two-state solution".

The UK was pivotal in laying the groundwork for the creation of the State of Israel through the 1917 Balfour Declaration.

Starmer said on Sunday that Britain was acting "in the face of the growing horror in the Middle East".

He renewed calls for a ceasefire and again demanded Hamas release its remaining hostages.

Branding Hamas a "brutal terror organisation", Starmer also confirmed plans to bolster sanctions on the militants, denying recognition was a "reward". Hamas's attack on southern Israel resulted in the deaths of 1,219 people, most of them civilians, according to an AFP tally of official figures.

Israel's retaliatory campaign has killed at least 65,208 people, also mostly civilians, according to figures from the health ministry in Hamas-run Gaza, which the UN considers reliable.

Israeli strikes kill more than 40 people in Gaza

CAIRO, AP: Israeli strikes in Gaza City and at a refugee camp killed more than 40 people, including 19 women and children, health officials said on Sunday, as several European countries and leading US allies moved to recognise a Palestinian state.

Health officials at Shifa Hospital, where most of the bodies were brought, said the dead included 14 people killed in a strike late Saturday which hit a residential block in the southern side of the city.

Health staff said a nurse who worked at the hospital was among the dead, along with his wife and three children.

Another strike that targeted a group of people in front of a clinic in the Bureij refugee camp in central Gaza killed at least eight Palestinians, according to the Al-Awda Hospital. The dead include four children and two women, the hospital said.

Another 22 people were wounded, it said. Israel did not comment on the strikes.

In Lebanon, the Health Ministry said Sunday that an Israeli drone strike in the southern city of Bint Jbeil killed five people.

WORLD AT A GLANCE

Artists perform during the traditional costume parade at the 190th Oktoberfest beer festival in Munich, southern Germany, on Sunday. AFP

Airport cyberattack disrupts more flights across Europe

▸ Fallout from a cyberattack that affected check-in systems at several European airports extended into a second full day on Sunday, as passengers faced dozens of cancelled and delayed flights and airport teams scrambled to limit the damage to travel plans, reports AP from Brussels.

Starting late Friday, major airports in Brussels, London and Berlin were hit by disruptions to electronic systems that snarled up check-in and sent airline staffers trying options like hand-writing boarding passes or using backup laptops. Many other European airports were unaffected.

It was not immediately clear who might be behind the cyberattack, but experts said it could turn out to be hackers, criminal organisations, or state actors.

The cyberattack affected the software of Collins Aerospace, whose systems help passengers check in, print boarding passes and bag tags, and dispatch their luggage. While departure boards for London's Heathrow and Berlin's Brandenburg airports were showing signs of smoother arrivals and departures on Sunday, Brussels Airport was still facing considerable issues.

Russian plane over Baltic sea

▸ Germany's air force on Sunday morning sent two Eurofighters to track a Russian IL-20m military aircraft that had entered neutral airspace over the Baltic Sea, it said, before handing the escort over to Nato partners in Sweden, reports Reuters from Berlin. "Once again, our quick reaction alert force, consisting of two Eurofighters, was tasked by Nato with investigating an unidentified aircraft without a flight plan or radio contact in international airspace," Germany's air force said in a statement.

"It was a Russian IL-20M reconnaissance aircraft. After visual identification, we handed over escort duties for the aircraft to our Swedish Nato partners and returned to Rostock-Laage."

Guinea's President Mamady Doumbouya (2nd L) and his wife Lauriane Doumbouya (L) leave a polling station after casting their ballots in Conakry on Sunday, during a constitutional referendum that could pave the way for elections and allow the junta leader to run for president. AFP

7 militants killed in Pak Army op

▸ Seven militants belonging to the banned terrorist outfit Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan were killed during an intelligence-based operation in northwestern Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, the army said on Sunday, reports PTI from Peshawar.

The operation was conducted on Saturday in Dera Ismail Khan district bordering South Waziristan after the presence of the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) militants was reported.

Among the seven eliminated by the security forces, three were Afghan nationals and two suicide bombers.

Pak: 6 kids among 8 buried alive

▸ Two adults and six children were buried alive and three injured when the roof of an academy came crashing down in Punjab province of Pakistan, an official said on Sunday, reports PTI from Lahore.

The incident took place in Hafizabad city, some 120 kms from northwest of Lahore, on Saturday evening.

Two teachers and nine students were present in a classroom of the academy when its roof collapsed, according to the Punjab Emergency Department Rescue 1122.

"They were trapped under the rubble. The rescue teams recovered four students alive and shifted them to a hospital, where one of them succumbed to his injuries," Rescue 1122 said in a statement.

Actor Angelina Jolie at the 73rd San Sebastian International Film Festival in San Sebastian, northern Spain, on Sunday. AFP

Saudi major source of cheap foreign loans for Pak: Report

ISLAMABAD, PTI: Saudi Arabia remains the major source of cheap foreign loans for Pakistan, charging an annual interest rate of only 4%, a media report said on Sunday.

Riyadh charged a 4% interest rate on two separate cash deposit facilities obtained by Islamabad in recent years, according to official records.

The loan, originally contracted for one year, has yet to be repaid, The Express Tribune reported.

The kingdom has been rolling it over annually without imposing additional costs.

The Saudi loans are about one-third cheaper than Chinese cash deposits and less than half the cost of foreign commercial borrowing, the report added.

A USD 2 billion Saudi cash deposit facility is set to mature in December, and the Ministry of Finance plans to roll it over again, according to the report, which quoted sources as saying.

Another USD 3 billion Saudi loan, obtained to plug the external financing gap under the IMF programme, will mature in June next year.

The IMF has stipulated that Pakistan's three bilateral creditors, Saudi Arabia, China and the United Arab Emirates, must maintain their cash deposits until the completion of the three-year programme.

Together, these countries have provided USD 12 billion in deposits, forming the bulk of the central bank's USD 14.3 billion gross foreign exchange reserves, the report said.

IMF programmes are no longer as effective in helping Pakistan as they were in the past.

US House members make rare China visit to stabilise ties

BEIJING, REUTERS

A group of US lawmakers on a rare visit to Beijing told China's No.2 leader, Premier Li Qiang, that the world's two largest economies need to step up engagement and "break the ice" as both superpowers made further inroads into stabilising ties.

The visit on Sunday was the first House of Representatives delegation to visit China since 2019. The Covid-19 pandemic ended formal House visits in 2020, and relations rapidly deteriorated due to disagreement over the origins of the coronavirus that had spread all over the world.

The trip by the bipartisan delegation, announced this month, follows a call on Friday between Presidents Donald Trump and Xi Jinping as both countries seek a course out of a period of strained ties exacerbated by trade tensions, U.S. restrictions over semiconductor chips, the ownership of TikTok, Chinese activities in the South China Sea, and matters related to Taiwan, which Beijing claims as part of its territory.

This "ice-breaking" trip will further bilateral ties, Premier Li told the lawmakers, according to a pool report organised by the US embassy in China.

The delegation is led by Democratic U.S. Representative Adam Smith. He is a former chair of and current top Democrat on the House Armed Services Committee, which oversees the U.S. Defense Department and armed forces. "We can both acknowledge that both China and the US have work to do to strengthen that relationship, which should not be, what, seven, six years between visits from the U.S. House of Representatives," Smith told Premier Li.

Taliban reject Trump's bid to retake Bagram Air Base

Urge the US to adopt a policy of realism and rationality

JALALABAD(AFGHANISTAN), AP

"It should be recalled that, under the Doha Agreement, the United States pledged that it will not use or threaten force against the territorial integrity or political independence of Afghanistan, nor interfere in its internal affairs"

The Taliban government on Sunday rejected US President Donald Trump's bid to retake Bagram Air Base, four years after America's chaotic withdrawal from Afghanistan left the sprawling military facility in the Taliban hands.

It is unclear what conversations the US has had with Afghan officials about returning to the country. But Trump hinted that the Taliban, who have struggled with an economic crisis, international legitimacy, internal rifts and rival militant groups since their return to power in 2021, could be open to allowing the US military back.

The chief Taliban spokesman, Zabihullah Mujahid, rejected Trump's assertions and urged the US to adopt a policy of "realism and rationality." Afghanistan had an economy-oriented foreign policy and sought constructive relations with all states on the basis of mutual and shared interests, Mujahid posted on X.

It had been consistently communicated to the US in all bilateral negotiations that Afghanistan's independence and territorial integrity were of the utmost importance, he said.

"It should be recalled that, under the Doha Agreement, the United States pledged that it will not use or threaten force against the territorial integrity or political independence of Afghanistan, nor interfere in its internal affairs,'" he said. The US needed to remain faithful to its commitments, he added.

Mujahid did not reply to questions from The Associated Press about conversations with the Trump administration regarding Bagram and why Trump believed the US could retake it.

In August last year, the Taliban celebrated the third anniversary of their takeover at Bagram with a grand military display of abandoned US hardware, catching the eye of the White House. Trump has repeatedly criticised his predecessor, Joe Biden, for his "gross incompetence" during the withdrawal of US forces after the country's longest war.

Trump publicly urges US Justice Department to charge his enemies

WASHINGTON, AFP

US President Donald Trump gestures, as he boards Air Force One to depart for a memorial service for slain conservative commentator Charlie Kirk. REUTERS

US President Donald Trump publicly urged his Justice Department on Saturday to take action against his enemies, the latest in a series of moves that critics say have shattered agency's traditional independence.

In a social media post addressing "Pam" -- apparently Attorney General Pam Bondi -- Trump fumed over the lack of legal action against California Senator Adam Schiff and New York Attorney General Letitia James, both Democrats.

Schiff and James are among a handful of people who have been accused by a close Trump ally, Federal Housing Finance Agency Director Bill Pulte, of falsifying documents on mortgage applications. "We can't delay any longer, it's killing our reputation and credibility," Trump said.

On Friday, Trump fired the federal prosecutor who was overseeing the probe into James, after the attorney reportedly insisted there was insufficient evidence to charge her with mortgage fraud.

Erik Siebert, US attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia, told staff of his resignation via an email on Friday. "I fired him, and there is a GREAT CASE, and many lawyers, and legal pundits, say so," Trump said on Saturday, apparently referencing the probe into James.

Schiff and James have separately clashed with Trump in prior years, leading investigations that the Republican president alleges were political witch hunts.

Trump said he had appointed White House aide Lindsey Halligan, to fill Siebert's position.

US prez to lead tributes at Kirk memorial

US President Donald Trump will lead tributes to Charlie Kirk on Sunday at a huge stadium gathering to honor the young right-wing influencer slain in America's latest spasm of political violence, reports AFP. As he left the White House to fly out west, Trump said the memorial service aimed "to celebrate the life of a great man. Really a great man."

'Should get Nobel prize': Trump again claims he stopped India-Pak conflict

NEW YORK/WASHINGTON, PTI

US President Donald Trump has repeated his claim that he solved the India-Pakistan conflict earlier this year with trade and asserted that he should get the Nobel Peace Prize for "ending seven wars".

Since May 10, when Trump announced on social media that India and Pakistan had agreed to a "full and immediate" ceasefire after a "long night" of talks mediated by Washington, he has repeated his claim over 40 times that he "helped settle" the tensions between India and Pakistan.

India has consistently denied any third-party intervention. "On the world stage, we are once again doing things that we are just respected at a level that we have never been respected before. We are forging peace agreements, and we are stopping wars. So we stopped wars between India and Pakistan, Thailand and Cambodia," Trump said at the American Cornerstone Institute Founder's Dinner on Saturday.

He went on to say, "Think of India and Pakistan. Think of that. And you know how I stopped that -- with trade. They want to trade. And I have great respect for both leaders. But when you take a look at all of these wars that we've stopped."

"Just look at that. India, Pakistan, Thailand, Cambodia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kosovo and Serbia, Israel and Iran, Egypt and Ethiopia, Rwanda and the Congo. We stopped all of them. And 60% of them were stopped because of trade," Trump claimed.

DEMOGRAPHIC PUSH

Polish hotelier offers perks for boosting birth rate

WARSAW, AFP

A Polish real estate group hopes to tackle the country's falling birth rate by rewarding clients who conceive babies in its hotels.

On its website the Arche group, which owns 23 hotels and numerous buildings across the country, laments the demographic crisis resulting from the steady 12-year decline of Poland's birth rate.

In an attempt to reverse that trend, the hotelier has launched an incentives programme offering "free special events", such as a baptism, to clients who can prove that "the conception" of a baby was "linked to the couple's stay" at one of their properties.

Couples are also offered a bonus of 10,000 zlotys ($2,754) for children born after the parents buy a home with the company.

The programme, Arche Generations, is valid for "couples (man and woman)", conditional on at least one partner being an adult Polish citizen and living in the country.

Bonuses will also be offered to Arche employees who have children.

As of late June, the population of Poland was approximately 37.4 million inhabitants, one million fewer than in 2015, according to the National Statistics Office GUS.

In 2024, there were 157,000 fewer births than deaths in Poland.

Odysseus wins Indian St Leger

PUNE RESULTS

Odysseus, from the stables of Pesi Shroff and ridden by Neeraj Rawal, won the Indian St Leger, the feature event of the Pune races on Sunday.

1. Caprisca Trophy - 1600M: Northbound (Aditya Waydande) 1; Yuletide (Trevor Patel) 2; The Flutist (CS Jodha) 3; Marlboro Man (Ramswarup) 4; WB: 1, 2, 1L; T: 1:39.98; TB: Pradeep Chouhan; Fav: Northbound.

2. Noble Prince Trophy - 1200M: Ariyana Star (Trevor Patel) 1; We Still Believe (Pranil) 2; Impulsive (Bhawani Singh) 3; Coin Empress (Nazil) 4; WB: 2-1/4, 1L, Shd; T: 1:10.01; TB: Aman Altaf Hussain; Fav: Flashman.

3. Mystic Memory Trophy - 1400M: Scaramouche (TS Jodha) 1; Kavya (Nikhil Parmar) 2; Shirsha (SG Prasad) 3; Chardikala (Sandesh) 4; WB: 1-1/2, 2, 2L; T: 1:24.47; TB: Behram Cama; Fav: Kavya.

4. Amazing Grace Trophy - 1600M: Pride's Prince (Antony Raj) 1; Chagall (Siddharth) 2; Singer Sargent (Umesh) 3; Alpine Star (A Paswan) 4; WB: 5, 3-3/4L, Hd; T: 1:37.93; TB: Imtiaz Sait; Fav: Pride's Prince.

5. Suraiya & Masoom Master Cup - 1200M: Western Star (Antony Raj) 1; Bee Magical (Neeraj Rawal) 2; Aperol (Trevor Patel) 3; Goddess Of Dawn (Ramswarup) 4; WB: 6-1/4, 3-1/4, 2-3/4L; T: 1:07.87; TB: N Lagad; Fav: Social Butterfly.

6. Warsaw Pact Trophy (Div II) - 1100M: Johnny Mac (G Vivek) 1; Mojo (R Gochhi) 2; Ladylion (Aditya Waydande) 3; She's A Teaser (Bhawani Singh) 4; WB: 1, 1-3/4, 3/4L; T: 1:14.98; TB: H Daji; Fav: Johnny Mac.

7. DCN Million - 1400M: Tyrannus (Antony Raj) 1; Caradoc (Trevor Patel) 2; Diego Garcia (Sandesh) 3; Dreamer (NS Parmar) 4; WB: Hd, Shd, 1-1/4L; T: 1:25.13; TB: Imtiaz Sait; Fav: Diego Garcia.

8. Indian St Leger - 2800M: Odysseus (Neeraj Rawal) 1; Pyrite (Mukesh Kumar) 2; Thalassa (Sandesh) 3; Duke Of Tuscany (Trevor Patel) 4; WB: 1, 2, 1L; T: 2:54.78; TB: Pesi Shroff; Fav: Positano.

9. Warsaw Pact Trophy (Div I) - 1100M: Abhicandra (Aditya Waydande) 1; Foujita (G Vivek) 2; Cindrella's Dream (Sandesh) 3; House Of Lords (A Prakash) 4; WB: 2-3/4, Shd, 1-14L; T: 1:04.39; TB: Sanjay Kolse; Fav: Foujita.

10. Bay Of Treasure Trophy - 1600M: Giant Gold (Aditya Waydande) 1; Beyond Stars (Muksh Kumar) 2; Marcus (Umesh) 3; Absolute Gorgeous (Ajinkya) 4; NR: Jagger; WB: 1-1/4, 2L, Lnk; T: 1:39.23; TB: Shahzaan Shah; Fav: Giant Gold.

Bengaluru dividends

I race: Rs 13w; 10, 14, 21p; Fc: Rs 22; Q: Rs 19; Shp: Rs 18; Thp: Rs 44; Tri: Rs 106 & 100; Ex: Rs 368 & 116.

II race: Rs 19w; Rs 10, 35, 30p; Fc: Rs 184; Q: Rs 162; Shp: Rs 84; Thp: Rs 83; Tri: Rs 1,516 & 949; Ex: Rs 13,335 & 5,715.

III race: Rs 25w; 16, 12p; Fc: Rs 61; Q: Rs 26; Shp: Rs 22; Thp: Rs 43; Tri: Rs 368 & 335; Ex: Rs 509 & 149.

IV race: Rs 22w; 13, 15p; Fc: Rs 40; Q: Rs 31; Shp: Rs 27; Thp: Rs 29; Tri: Rs 60 & 27. Ex: Rs 137 & 90.

V race: Rs 35w; 10, 13, 19p; Fc: Rs 199; Q: Rs 85; Shp: Rs 38; Thp: Rs 31; Tri: Rs 679 & 364; Ex: Rs 5,036 & 4,317.

VI race: Rs 14w; 12, 15, 20p; Fc: Rs 39; Q: Rs 40; Shp: Rs 35; Thp: Rs 44; Tri: Rs 103 & 78; Ex: Rs 630 & 320.

VII race: Rs 49w; 16, 13, 13p; Fc: Rs 361; Q: Rs 123; Shp: Rs 40; Thp: Rs 92; Tri: Rs 330 & 96; Ex: Rs 3,81242 & 3,268.

VIII race: Rs 223w; 28, 26, 14p; Fc: Rs 6,702; Q: Rs 2,172; Shp: Rs 65; Thp: Rs 35; Tri: Rs 12,420 & 5,323; Ex: Rs 13,184 & 8,475.

IX race: Rs 120w; 27, 13, 12p; Fc: Rs 643; Q: Rs 161; Shp: Rs 28; Thp: Rs 75; Tri: Rs 745 & 185; Ex: Rs 6,493 & 4,174.

X race: Rs 21w; 10, 29, 20p; Fc: Rs 140; Q: Rs 158; Shp: Rs 43; Thp: Rs 47; Tri: Rs 896 & 331; Ex: Rs 10,304 & 2,760.

I jackpot: Rs 2,818 (47). **Runner-up:** Rs 176 (322). II jackpot: Rs 60,615 (8). **Runner-up:** Rs 14,844 (14). **I treble:** Rs 143 (28). **II treble:** Rs 3,299 (c/o). **III treble**: Rs 10,287 (1).

Sugar hits the sweet spot

HYDERABAD RESULTS

Lesser fancied Sugar, from the stables of Hilton Sequeira and ridden by Afroz Khan, won the PVG Raju Memorial Cup, the feature event of the Hyderabad races on Sunday.

1. Major General Nawab Khusru Jung Bahadur Memorial Cup (Div II) - 1200M: N R I Sport (HM Akshay) 1; Dyanoosh (Kuldeep Singh) 2; Great Giver (Surya Prakash) 3; Warwick (Ajeeth Kumar) 4; WB: 2-1/2, 1-1/4, 3L; T: 1:12.05; TB: Hiton Sequeira; Fav: Warwick.

2. Nawab Sultan Ali Khan Memorial Cup -1400M: Certainty (Ashhad Asbar) 1; Authoritarian (Naresh) 2; Opera Queen (Kuldeep Singh) 3; Cherish The Lady (Sai Kumar) 4; WB: 8-1/2, 1-1, 8L; T: 1:26.83; TB: Laxman Singh; Fav: Certainty.

3. Raja Saheb Of Challapalli Memorial Cup - 1600M: Pride Aside (B Nikhil) 1; La Fleuriere (HM Akshay) 2; Whistledown (Ashhad Asbar) 3; La Quinta (Likith Appu) 4; WB: 1-1/2, 1/2L, Hd; T: 1:41.10; TB: Ravinder Singh; Fav: Pride Aside.

4. PVG Raju Memorial Cup - 1400M: Sugar (Afroz Khan) 1; Hugh Capet (Kuldeep Singh) 2; D Minchu (Ajeeth Kumar) 3; Detective (Gaurav Singh) 4; WB: Nk, 2L, Shd. T: 1:26.79; TB: Hilton Sequeira; Fav: Hugh Capet.

5. SN Reddy Memoria Cup - 1400M: Cape May (Ekram Alam) 1; Ilene (Deepak Singh) 2; N R I Star (HM. Akshay) 3; Deccan Ranger (Surya Prakash) 4; NR: Hoping High; WB: 2-1/4, 2-1/4, 1-1/4L; T: 1:28.66; TB: Leo Desilva; Fav: Cape May.

6. Major General Nawab Khusru Jung Bahadur Memorial Cup (Div I) - 1200M: Runlikethewind (Bharat Venkat) Sonu Kumar 1; Baisa (Gaurav Singh) 2; Federer (HM Akshay) 3; Catchme If You Can (B Nikhil) 4; NR: Shadow Baby; WB: 3/4, 3-3/4, 7-1/4L; T: 1:13.86; TB: Leo Desilva; Fav: Baisa.

7. Major General Nawab Khusru Jung Bahadur Memorial Cup (Div II) - 1200M: Romantic Grey (Afroz Khan) 1; Clefairy (Vikrant) 2; Pontefract (Likith Appu) 3; Shadow Fax (Ajay Kumar) 4; WB: HL, Shd, Hd; T: 1:14.27; TB: Leo Desilva; Fav: Romantic Grey.

Bengaluru dividends

I race: Rs 273w; 29, 13, 12p; Fc: Rs 2,394; Q: Rs 927; Shp: Rs 29; Thp: Rs 32; Tri: Rs 17,645 & 7,562; Ex: Rs 23,219 (c/o).

II race: Rs 13w; Rs 12, 17, 18p; Fc: Rs 25; Q: Rs 35; Shp: Rs 24; Thp: Rs 32; Tri: Rs 137 & 129; Ex: Rs 266 & 73.

III race: Rs 16w; 14, 46, 20p; Fc: Rs 221; Q: Rs 140; Shp: Rs 117; Thp: Rs 61; Tri: Rs 905 & 175; Ex: Rs 10,459 & 3,361.

IV race: Rs 72w; 15, 10, 10p; Fc: Rs 313; Q: Rs 75; Shp: Rs 35; Thp: Rs 44; Tri: Rs 352 & 112. Ex: Rs 815 & 524.

V race: Rs 23w; 15, 21, 60p; Fc: Rs 200; Q: Rs 94; Shp: Rs 59; Thp: Rs 109; Tri: Rs 2,425 & 1,659; Ex: Rs 7,826 & 3,354.

VI race: Rs 227w; 21, 10, 16p; Fc: Rs 805; Q: Rs 126; Shp: Rs 35; Thp: Rs 33; Tri: Rs 1,610 & 1,035; Ex: Rs 4,368 & 2,808.

VII race: Rs 20w; 14, 19, 20p; Fc: Rs 129; Q: Rs 136; Shp: Rs 51; Thp: Rs 58; Tri: Rs 885 & 407; Ex: Rs 3,809 & 1,088.

Jackpot: Rs 12,159 (9). **Runner-up:** Rs 3,908 (12). **I treble:** Rs 365 (6). **II treble:** Rs 4,422 (c/o).

ATHLETICS WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

Sydney blazes track in rain

American sprinters clinch 4x100m relay golds on final day of event

TOKYO, AFP

LEFT: USA's Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone crosses the finishing line first after running the anchor leg of the women's 4x400m relay in Tokyo on Sunday. USA sprinters (from left) Noah Lyles, Kenneth Bednarek, Christian Coleman and Courtney Lindsey pose after winning the men's 4x100m relay. REUTERS

Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone won her second gold of the world championships in Tokyo on Sunday, anchoring the USA team to a dominant victory in the 4x400 metres relay. The USA, in fact, dominated the relay events, winning three of the four finals.

Noah Lyles won his second gold in Tokyo after anchoring the USA team to victory in the men's 4x100 metres relay. In the women's 4x100m final, Melissa Jefferson-Wooden became only the second woman to win a world sprint treble after leading the United States to gold, with Jamaica's Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce taking silver in her final race.

Double Olympic 400m hurdles champion McLaughlin-Levrone, who impressively won the 400m flat gold at these championships earlier in the week, put in a punishing last leg timed at a rapid 47.82sec to bring the USA team home in a championship record of 3:16.61.

They beat by 0.10sec the previous best set by the United States in Stuttgart in 1993. Jamaica claimed silver in 3:19.25, with the Netherlands taking bronze in 3:20.18. Femke Bol, fresh from retaining her 400m hurdles crown and known for her fast finishing speed, was on the anchor leg for the Dutch team. But she had been left too much to do and could only chase down the shadows of her hurdling nemesis McLaughlin-Levrone.

Botswana's quartet of Lee Bhekempilo Eppie, Letsile Tebogo, Bayapo Ndori and the individual 400m world champion Busang Collen Kebinatshipi claimed a thrilling victory in the men's 4x400m relay. Kebinatshipi ran an impressive anchor leg, stealing the win in the final metres after running down American Rai Benjamin, the 400m hurdles gold medallist.

Botswana timed 2:57.76 to top the podium, with the US foursome taking silver 0.07sec adrift. World 400m record holder Wayde van Niekerk ran the third leg to help South Africa to bronze.

USA dominance

In the men's 4x100m relay, the American quartet of Christian Coleman, Kenny Bednarek, Courtney Lindsey and Lyles clocked 37.29sec. Canada bagged silver in 37.55, with the Netherlands taking bronze in 37.81.

MEDALS TABLE

P	Country	G	S	B	Total
1	United States	16	5	5	26
2	Kenya	7	2	2	11
3	Canada	3	1	1	5
4	Netherlands	2	2	2	6
5	Botswana	2	0	1	3

Lyles only won bronze in the 100m last weekend but then matched Jamaican legend Usain Bolt's record of four consecutive world 200m titles after he convincingly won that event on Friday. The relay victory handed Lyles an eighth world gold as part of his 10-medal haul.

In the women's 4x100m relay, Jefferson-Wooden matched Fraser-Pryce's achievement from the 2013 world championships in Moscow by adding to the 100m and 200m titles that she bagged in Tokyo.

She led off the race in driving rain before handing off to her team-mate Twanisha Terry before Kayla White ran the bend and Sha'Carri Richardson took the baton across the line in a time of 41.75sec. Jamaica were second in 41.79sec, followed by Germany in 41.87. Fraser-Pryce was competing in her final race before bringing the curtain down on an incredible 17-year career.

Meanwhile, American Cole Hocker sprinted to victory in the men's 5,000 metres, making up for his disqualification in the 1,500m. The Olympic 1,500m champion timed 12min 58.30sec for gold.

Belgium's Kenyan-born Isaac Kimeli took silver in 12:58.78, with France's Jimmy Gressier claiming a bronze medal to add to his shock 10,000m gold. Norway's Jakob Ingebrigtsen came into the race as defending champion, but eventually came 10th in 13:02.00.

Results: Men: 4x100m relay: USA 37.29s, 1; Canada 37.55, 2; Netherlands 37.8.
4x400m relay: Botswana 2:57.76s, 1; USA 2:57.83, 2; South Africa 2:57.83, 3.
5000m: Cole Hocker (USA) 12:58.30s, 1; Isaac Kimeli (BEL) 12:58.78, 2; Jimmy Gressier (FRA) 12:59.33
Discus throw: Daniel Stahl (SWE) 70.47m, 1; Mykolas Alekna (LTU) 67.84, 2; Alex Rose (SAM) 66.96
Women: 4x100m relay: USA 41.75s, 1; Jamaica 41.79, 2; Germany 41.87, 3.
4x400m relay: USA 3:16.61s, 1 (CR); Jamaica 3:19.25, 2; Netherlands 3:20.18 3.
800m: Lilian Odira (KEN) 1:54.62s, 1 (CR), Georgia Hunter Bell (GBR) 1:54.90, Keely Hodgkinson (GBR) 1:54.91
High jump: Nicola Olyslagers (AUS) 2.00m, 1; Maria Zodzik (POL) 2.00, 2; Yaroslava Mahuchikh (UKR) 1.97.

Second successive runners-up spot for Satwik-Chirag

Indian duo loses to World No. 1 Korean pair at China Masters

SHENZHEN, PTI

India's top men's doubles duo of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty endured yet another heartbreak, falling in straight games to World No.1 Kim Won Ho and Seo Seung Jae of Korea in a gripping China Masters Super 750 final here on Sunday.

The Asian Games champions had hoped to end their title drought but squandered a 14-7 advantage in the opening game before slipping to a 19-21, 15-21 defeat in 45 minutes.

Satwik and Chirag came into their second successive final in supreme touch, not dropping a game all week after adding a second World Championships bronze and finishing runners-up at the Hong Kong Open. But they would rue letting slip the opening game from a position of strength.

Kim and Seo, who reunited this season after experimenting with other partners, were contesting their ninth final of 2025, having already won six titles, including a World Championships gold in Paris and Super 1000 crowns at the All England and Indonesia Open.

It was billed as a battle between the world's best attack and the best defence and it did have its moments but in the end Kim and Seo showed better nerves and technical acumen to emerge victories.

In the opening, the Koreans jumped to a 3-0 lead but the Indians stormed back with a flurry of angled smashes to make it 6-all. Chirag's deft touches at the net gave them an 11-7 cushion at the break and soon they stretched it to 14-8.

However, errors crept in, a lost video challenge broke their rhythm and the Koreans pounced on eight of the next nine points to wrest back the momentum at 15-all. Kim served a fault but a deceptive return kept it tight at 17-17.

India's Chirag Shetty (front) and Satwiksairaj Rankireddy lost to World No.1 Kim Won Ho and Seo Seung Jae of Korea at the China Masters final in Shenzhen on Sunday. AFP FILE PHOTO

Martinelli's last-gasp leveller rescues Arsenal

LONDON, AFP

Gabriel Martinelli (right) celebrates after scoring Arsenal's equaliser against Manchester City on Sunday. REUTERS

Gabriel Martinelli rescued Arsenal as the Brazilian's last-gasp equaliser salvaged a 1-1 draw against Manchester City on Sunday when Pep Guardiola's defensive tactics backfired at the Emirates Stadium.

With City clinging to the lead given to them by Erling Haaland early in the first half, Guardiola made a series of unusually cautious substitutions that left his side without a recognised striker on the pitch in the closing stages.

It was the kind of rearguard action that is rarely associated with the attack-minded Guardiola, but his willingness to sacrifice his purist principles for a more pragmatic approach came back to haunt him.

It was a change made by Arsenal manager Mikel Arteta that proved decisive as Martinelli came off the bench to spare his team from a second defeat to a title rival after their loss at champions Liverpool in August.

Arsenal moved up to second place, five points behind Liverpool, while City are languishing in ninth with just two wins from their first five league matches.

Already eight points adrift of Liverpool, it will take a significant improvement from Guardiola's men to catch Arne Slot's pace-setters, who have won their first five league matches.

Villa's woes continue

Aston Villa remain winless this season after blowing a one-goal and a man advantage in a 1-1 draw at Sunderland, while Newcastle were held 0-0 at Bournemouth on Sunday.

Villa's rise over recent years under the tutelage of Unai Emery has come to a halt as they remain in the bottom three with just three points from their opening five games.

Man Utd beat Chelsea

Manchester United eased the pressure on beleaguered boss Ruben Amorim with a chaotic 2-1 win against Chelsea as both teams finished with 10 men at Old Trafford.

Results: Arsenal: 1 (Martinelli 90th+3) drew with Manchester City: 1 (Haaland 9th); Sunderland: 1 (Isidor 75th) drew with Aston Villa: 1 (Cash 67th); Bournemouth: 0 drew with Newcastle: 0; Manchester United: 2 (Fernandes 14th, Casemiro 37th) bt Chelsea: 1 (Chalobah 80th).

Fasil brace powers Rebels FC

BENGALURU, DHNS: Muhammed Fasil netted a brace as Rebels FC beat South United 2-0 in the KSFA Super Division League Championship at the Bangalore Football Stadium here on Sunday.

LOCAL FOOTBALL

South United FC's Satminlun Khongsai (left) and Rebels FC's Kristopher Malngiang battle for possession in their KSFA Super Division League Championship game at the BFS on Sunday.
DH PHOTO/ PUSHKAR V

Fasil broke the deadlock in the 28th minute to give Rebels a 1-0 lead. He then doubled their lead in the 57th minute to help his team ease to victory.

In the day's other fixtures, goals from Suraj Wang Kham and Hunaies CU saw HAL FC beat Roots FC 2-0, while FC Bengaluru United and Kodagu FC played out a 1-1 draw.

Results: Rebels FC: 2 (Muhammed Fasil 28th, 57th) bt South United FC: 0; FC Bengaluru United: 1 (Ribhav Sardesai 90th+3) drew with Kodagu FC: 1 (Shashank Rana 35th); HAL FC: 2 (Suraj Wang Kham 45th, Hunaies CU 90th+5) bt Roots FC: 0.

NRI Superpower for main event

HYDERABAD SELECTIONS

Hilton Sequeira-trained NRI Superpower is fancied to win the Nobel Quest Plate, the feature event of the Hyderabad races for the highest rated horses to be run over a distance of nine furlongs at the races on Monday. The first race starts at 1:55 pm.

1. Shivkumar Lad Memorial Cup (Div II) - 1100M: Her Ladyship 1; Most Beautiful 2; Dontblockmyway 3.
2. Nalagonda Plate - 1200M: Divine Faith 1; State Man 2; Emerald Touch 3.
3. G Sudhakar Reddy Memorial Trophy - 1600M: Lego 1; Sunny Day 2; Silver Arrow 3.
4. Shivkumar Lal Memorial Cup (Div I) - 1100M: N R I Superpower 1; Quick Bay Fox 2; Only The Brave 3.
5. Noble Quest Plate - 1800M: NRI Superpower 1; Get Lucky 2; Livermore 3.
6. Taj Mahal Plate - 1100M: Bright Knight 1; Smart Operator 2; Kitsune 3.
Day's best: Divine Faith.
Jackpot: 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6.
I treble: 2, 3 & 4.
II treble: 4, 5 & 6.

Kenyans win Berlin Marathon

BERLIN, AFP: Kenyans Sabastian Sawe and Rosemary Wanjiru won the men's and women's editions of the Berlin Marathon on Sunday, both breaking through for the first time in the German capital.

Sabastian Sawe (left) and Rosemary Wanjiru.

Sawe finished in 2hr 02min 16sec in just his third marathon attempt, 11 seconds slower than his personal best set on debut in Valencia in 2024.

The 30-year-old Wanjiru, who finished second in Berlin in 2022, is the first Kenyan woman to win the race since 2018 in a time of 2:21:05.

Pradeep, Ashwini take top spots

BENGALURU, DHNS: Pradeep Singh Chaudhary and Ashwini Madan Jadhav clinched the elite men's and women's titles respectively at the 12th edition of the Wipro Bengaluru Marathon on Sunday.

Results: Full Marathon: Elite Men: Pradeep Singh Chaudhary (02:25:19), 1; Arun Dhansing Rathod (02.25:31), 2; Harshad Mhatre (02:26:02), 3.
Elite Women: Ashvini Madan Jadhav (03.03:59), 1; Bhagirathi (03:07:07), 2; Chinta Yadav (03.16:03), 3.
Half Marathon: Men: Ankit Gupta (01.06:10), 1; Guruprasad (01:08:49), 2; Sandeep TS (01.11:03), 3. **Women:** Devangi Purkayastha (01:29:17), 1; Poornima C (01:34:06), 2; Meenu (01:37:09), 3.

Karnataka shuttlers return with bounty of medals

BENGALURU, DHNS

Karnataka shuttlers topped the podium in five events at the Yonex-Sunrise Ashwani Gupta Memorial All India Sub-junior Ranking badminton tournament in Panchkula on Sunday.

In the under-17 section, fourth seed Shaina Manimuthu scored a come-from-behind 9-21, 21-17, 21-4 victory over Odisha's Tanvi Patri in the final of the girls' singles.

It was a clean sweep of titles in the doubles section for the state's players. Second-seeded Pavan S and Punith S defeated top-seeded Charan Ram Thippana and Hari Krishna Veeram Reddy of Andhra Pradesh 21-17, 21-14 in the boys' doubles before top seeds Aditi Deepak Raj and Vriddhi Ponnamma got the better of state-mates Akiya Shetty and Suhina 21-6, 21-14.

Punith and Aditi then teamed-up to down Jangjeet Singh Kajla and his partner R Jananika (21-13, 21-13) to lift the mixed doubles' trophy.

In the under-15 boys' singles, top seed Sai Pushkar fended off Wazir Singh's (Punjab) the challenge to score a 21-15, 23-21 win to finish as the winner.

There was more good news in store as 12 Karnataka shuttlers - Vriddhi, Aditi, Shaina, Sai Pushkar, Pavan, Punith, Hardik Divyansh, Lakshya Rajesh, Raksha, Vibhava GD, Suhina Roy GD, Aikya Shetty - were selected to represent India at the Badminton Asia U-15 & U-17 Junior Championship scheduled to be held at Chengdu, China from October 21-26.

Results (all finals, prefix denotes seeding):
U-17: Boys singles: 12-Bornil Akash Changmai (Asm) bt 2-Jagsher Singh Khangurra (Dli) 21-17, 21-19.
Doubles: 2-Pavan S/ Punith S (Kar) bt 1-Charan Ram Thippana/ Hari Krishna Veeram Reddy (AP) 21-17, 21-14.
Girls: Singles: 4-Shaina Manimuthu (Kar) bt 6-Tanvi Patri (Ori) 9-21, 21-17, 21-4.
Doubles: 1-Aditi Deepak Raj/ Vriddhi Ponnamma (Kar) bt 7-Akiya Shetty/ Suhina 21-6, 21-14 (Kar).
Mixed doubles: 4-Punith S/ Aditi Raj Deepak (Kar) bt 8-Jangjeet Singh Kajla (Raj)/ R Jananika (PY) 21-13, 21-13.
U-15: Boys singles: 1-Sai Pushkar (Kar) bt 2-Wazir Singh (Pnb) 21-15, 23-21.
Doubles: 2-Swayamdyuti Ghosh (WB)/ Shaurya Singh Rana (UTR)bt 3-Vivaan Bisht/ Chinmay Krishna Nimmagadda (Dli) 22-20, 23-25, 17-21.
Girls: Singles: 7-Tanvi Patri (Ori) bt 5-Anvi Rathore (Raj) 21-11, 21-10.
Doubles: Vibhava Kedalasara/ Raksha N (Mah) bt 1-Sharayu Ranjane/ Soyara Shelar (Kar) 21-11, 21-19.
Mixed doubles: 1-Hemanth Sri Sammetla (AP)/ Sharayu Ranjane (Mah) bt Arjun A/ Nayonika A (TN) 21-13, 21-13.

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SHORT TERM 'E' TENDER NOTIFICATION

No. KSWC/ENG/190/F-54/2025-2026 **Date: 19-09-2025**

The Managing Director, Karnataka State Warehousing Corporation, Bangalore invites e-tender for ENGAGEMENT OF PPP Cell, IDP & IWTD, GoK Empanelled Transaction Advisor as Management Consultant for Work of Installation of Rooftop Solar PV Systems on KSWC Warehouses at 52 Centers under PPP Model. The details are available in our website **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**

Date of availability of e-procurement portal on **22.09.2025.** The last date for receipt of proposal is on **29.09.2025 up to 5.30 PM**. The opening of Technical Bid is on **30.09.2025 at 4.30 PM.**

Further details can be obtained from the office of the under signed during working hours and also at website **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**

For any clarification, contact Executive Engineer KSWC (9916981818 / 9740675654)

DIPR/CP/2913/AKAR/2025-26 **Sd/- MANAGING DIRECTOR**

KARNATAKA POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED
(CIN: U40109KA1999SGC025521)
No. CEE/Tr(OP)Z/SEE(O)/AE-2/25-26/7043-45 Dated:19.09.2025

TENDER NOTIFICATION
(THROUGH KARNATAKA PUBLIC PROCUREMENT PORTAL ONLY)

KPTCL invites Tenders against Bid Enquiry numbers for the following works.

(1) Bid Enquiry No.: KPTCL/CEE/Tr(o)Z/SEE(O)/AE-2/ 2025-26/0047 dt: 17.09.2025. for Augmentation of 2x10 MVA, 110/11kV Power Transformer-1 & 2 by 2x20MVA 110/11kV Power Transformer's at 110/11KV Doddaguni sub-station in Gubbi Taluk, Tumakuru District under Operation Division, KPTCL, Tumakuru.

(2) Bid Enquiry No.: KPTCL/CEE/Tr(o)Z/SEE(O)/AE-2/ 2025-26/0048 dt: 17.09.2025. for Augmentation of 1x12.5MVA, 66/11kV Power Transformer-2 by 1x20MVA 66/11kV Power Transformer at 66/11KV Thovinkere sub-station in Koratagere Taluk, Tumakuru District under Operation Division, KPTCL, Tumakuru.

(3) Bid Enquiry No.: KPTCL/CEE/Tr(o)Z/SEE(O)/AE-2/ 2025-26/0049 dt: 17.09.2025. for Augmentation of 1 x8 MVA, 66/11kV Power Transformer-2 by 1x 20MVA 66/11kV Power Transformer's at 66/11KV Urdigere sub-station in Koratagere Taluk, Tumakuru District coming under Operation Division, KPTCL, Tumakuru.

(4) Bid Enquiry No.: KPTCL/CEE/Tr(o)Z/SEE(O)/AE-2/ 2025-26/0050 dt: 17.09.2025. for Augmentation of 1x6.3MVA &1x8MVA, 66/11kV Power Transformer-1 & 2 by 2x20MVA 66/11kV Power Transformer at 66/11KV sub-station Heggere in Tumakuru Taluk, Tumakuru District coming under Operation Division Tumakuru.

For all above works including supply of equipments/materials, Dismantling and erection (including civil works), under **Partial Turnkey Basis**, on Percentage Tender Basis' (Power Transformer & NFIS will be supplied by KPTCL Testing and commissioning will be carried out by KPTCL).

The detailed information regarding subject enquiry in KPP portal can be obtained by logging on to KPTCL website **www.kptcl.karnataka.gov.in** on hyperlink E Procurement KPTCL or **http:/kppp.karnataka.gov.in on or after 26.09.2025** and other details can be obtained from the office of the undersigned.

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IN BRIEF

U-15 football meet on Oct 25 & 26

▸ Rush Arena football ground in Cooke Town will be conducting the 12th All-India football tournament (5-a-side) for under-15 boys on October 25 & 26.

The league-cum-knockout tournament is open for all schools, clubs, groups, academies and associations. Players born from Oct 15, 2010 onwards are eligible to play.

Last date for entries is September 25. Teams interested may email: denzsports@gmail.com or call 8095810030.

Messi brace lifts Miami

▸ Superstar Lionel Messi scored two superb goals and created another as Inter Miami beat DC United 3-2 on Saturday to inch closer to an MLS Cup playoff berth, reports AFP from Miami.

Amid indications this week from sources close to the club that Messi is poised to sign a contract extension that would keep him in Miami at least through next year.

Mourinho enjoys winning return

▸ Jose Mourinho enjoyed a winning return to coaching in his native Portugal after new club Benfica beat AFS 3-0 on the road, reports AP from Lisbon

Mourinho was announced as Benfica's coach on Thursday, the same club where he started his storied coaching career back in 2000.

Disabled cricketers win

▸ Veteran Ravindra Patil of Mumbai was honoured with the Lifetime Achievement Award, while Karnataka's Rajesh Kannur bagged the Player of the Year honour at the inaugural Divyam Cricket Awards – Physical Disability Annual Awards, reports PTI from Jaipur.

The awards, instituted to formally recognise the achievements of disabled cricketers, saw several players from across the country being felicitated at a ceremony organised by as the Differently Abled Cricket Council of India (DCCI) in collaboration with the Rajasthan Disabled Cricket Association (RDCA).

Three die of electrocution

▸ Three persons were electrocuted to death and as many others suffered burns when a tent for spectators came in contact with a high-tension power line during a kabaddi match in Chhattisgarh's Kondagaon district, police said on Sunday, reports PTI from Kondagaon.

Manhas surprise pick for BCCI president; Bhat for treasurer

Saikia to continue as the Board secretary; Dhumal to remain IPL chairman

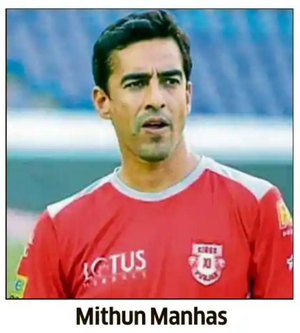
MUMBAI/ BENGALURU
PTI/ DHNS

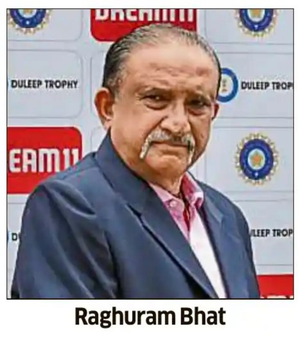
The cricketing fraternity was taken by major surprise on Sunday as former Delhi captain Mithun Manhas filed his nomination for the post of BCCI president at the board's headquarters, while Karnataka State Cricket Association's incumbent president Raghuram Bhat is set to become the treasurer.

The name of Manhas, a proven performer on the domestic circuit with an experience of 157 first-class, 130 List A and 55 IPL matches, apparently came to the fore during an informal meeting in New Delhi where the powers to be decided he could be the right man to replace the outgoing Roger Binny.

Apart from electing a new president, several other key positions will be filled up when the BCCI meets on September 28 for its annual general meeting in Mumbai.

"A new body is being made for the next term. Mithun Manhas is a former player and it was decided to make him the president. Arun Dhumal is the chairman of the IPL governing council and he will continue in that position," BCCI vice-president Rajeev Shukla told the media in Mumbai.


Mithun Manhas


Raghuram Bhat

Among those who filed their nominations were BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia, IPL governing council chairman Arun Dhumal and Bhat, a former India cricketer.

Bhat confirmed that he has applied for the treasurer's post and is the lone candidate to do so. "Yes, I have filed my nomination."

Left-arm spinner Bhat, an outstanding performer for Karnataka with 374 wickets in 82 first-class matches, represented India in two Tests with the legendary Pakistani Javed Miandad being his first victim in international cricket.

Since his retirement from cricket, Bhat has gone on to don many hats -- coach, selector and administrator, most recently being elected as the president of KSCA in November 2022. Bhat's term at KSCA is set to conclude at the end of this month when a new set of office bearers are to be elected for the State association.

Current BCCI treasurer Prabhtej Bhatia is slated to replace Rohan Gauns Desai as the joint secretary. Saurashtra CA president Jaydev Shah will replace Dilip Vengsarkar in the Apex Council.

Saikia filed his nomination to continue as the secretary of the BCCI, having taken up the role in January this year. "I have been the secretary for the last few months, my colleagues wanted me to file the nominations so I did," Saikia said.

Team announcement

Saikia said the Indian team for the two-Test series against the West Indies will be picked in a couple of days.

"The team will be picked on September 23 or 24. The selection meeting will be held online," he said.

The first Test will be played in Ahmedabad from October 2-6 while the second will be in New Delhi from October 10-14.

It will be the first home assignment in the World Test Championship cycle 2025-27 for Shubman Gill's side.

Gill took over as India's full-time Test captain in June this year ahead of the tour to England.

Sourav Ganguly

Ganguly set for unopposed return as CAB president

KOLKATA, PTI: Former India captain Sourav Ganguly is set to return unopposed as Cricket Association of Bengal president at its annual general meeting here on Monday, but his second stint promises to be more challenging with the association hit by financial irregularities and credibility concerns in recent months.

The entire panel led by Ganguly -- Bablu Kolay (secretary), Madan Mohan Ghosh (joint-secretary), Sanjay Das (treasurer) and Anu Dutta (vice-president) -- is also set to be elected unopposed.

The 53-year-old former BCCI president will be replacing his elder brother Snehasish Ganguly, who had to step down following the six-year cap on executive positions as mandated by the Lodha Committee directives.

CAB's image has been dented by a series of controversies in the recent past while the performance of the Ranji Trophy side has been lukewarm.

Finance committee member Subrata Saha was recently fined Rs 2 lakh and barred from sub-committee activities after being found guilty of conflict of interest, while the association itself was also penalised.

Earlier in August, joint-secretary Debabrata Das was suspended for six months over allegations of financial misconduct.

"Most organisations have issues to deal with. In the future, if there are issues it will be dealt in an appropriate manner," Ganguly responded with a straight bat after filing his nomination last Sunday.

Ganguly will also have to balance his administrative responsibilities with coaching duties, having been appointed head coach of Pretoria Capitals.

OPENERS LAY FOUNDATION IN INDIA'S SIX-WICKET TRIUMPH OVER ARCH-RIVALS

FIERY ABHISHEK knocks Pakistan down

R KAUSHIK
DUBAI

How do you respond to putting down a catch off the third ball of the match? With a match-winning half-century, of course.

Abhishek Sharma shelled Sahibzada Farhan off Hardik Pandya, a regulation offering, at third man with not a run on the board. The 25-year-old left-hander, who gave Farhan another life off Kuldeep Yadav later in the innings, decided to make amends with a crunchy half-century, helping India begin their Super Four campaign in the T20 Asia Cup on a winning note at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium.

Pakistan started and ended their batting innings with a flourish after being put in by Suryakumar Yadav, capitalising on a rare off-day for Jasprit Bumrah to post 171 for five. It was decidedly sub-par, given that they had reached 91 for one at the halfway stage, but with Abhishek in full cry and Shubman Gill rediscovering his best, even 15 or 20 more might not have sufficed.

The two friends joined hands in an entertaining, action-packed and eye-catching stand of 105 for the opening wicket, off a mere 59 deliveries. India did suffer a few setbacks from there on, including losing Suryakumar for a duck, but the momentum and the volume of runs that the openers had provided meant they were under no real pressure. Tilak Varma applied the finishing touches with a six and a four off Shaheen Shah Afridi, muscling India to their seventh successive win against Pakistan, by six wickets.

Shubman Gill plays a cut shot during his 47-run knock. AFP

Abhishek laid down the marker with a six off the first ball of the chase, from Afridi that he deposited over fine-leg. It was the cue for a hectic passage of play, Gill unfurling delectable fours all around the park and Abhishek mocking the length of the boundaries with crisp ball-striking. There were no handshakes again but plenty of needle, Abhishek and Haris Rauf, who bowled superbly, getting into a pow-wow that needed the umpires to step in and calm things down.

Having been dismissed in the 30s in all three previous hits, Abhishek rattled to his 50 in just 24 deliveries; the 100 came up in 8.4 overs and India were coasting when a break in play and a terrific break-back from Faheem Ashraf accounted for Gill. India were rocked by the dismissal of Suryakumar in the next over, but even though Abhishek fell to catch in the deep and Sanju Samson to a terrible hoick, they had enough in the tank as they coasted home with seven deliveries to spare. Fakhar Zaman, promoted ahead of Saim Ayub to partner Farhan, played some handsome strokes in the night before Pandya had him caught behind, after which Pakistan's second-wicket pair made merry, helped by shoddy catching and tardy fielding. There was great urgency in running between the wickets as Farhan and Ayub added 72 for the second wicket when Abhishek held on to an excellent catch, running in from deep backward square, to send Ayub packing off Shivam Dube.

Dube's medium-pace brought India two for 16 in three overs, Pakistan's innings going boundary-less between overs 9.3 and 17.1. Ashraf was primarily responsible for 43 coming off the final three overs as he tucked into the bowling during an eight-ball 20 not out. Among those who received punishment was Bumrah. The ace in India's pack conceded 34 in his first three overs, the most runs he has been taken for in the Powerplay in all 20-over cricket, and finished with disappointing figures of none for 45, but the others rallied around him.

CRICKET ASIA CUP

SCOREBOARD

PAKISTAN

Farhan c Suryakumar b Dube	58 (45b, 5x4, 3x6)
Zaman c Samson b Pandya	15 (9b, 3x4)
Ayub c Abhishek b Dube	21 (17b, 1x4, 1x6)
Talat c Chakravarthy b Kuldeep	10 (11b)
Nawaz (run out)	21 (19b, 1x4, 1x6)
Agha (not out)	17 (13b, 1x6)
Ashraf (not out)	20 (8b, 1x4, 2x6)
Extras (W-7, NB-2)	9
Total (for 5 wkts, 20 overs)	**171**

Fall of wickets: 1-21 (Zaman), 2-93 (Ayub), 3-110 (Talat), 4-115 (Farhan), 5-149 (Nawaz)
Bowling: Pandya 3-0-29-1 (w-2), Bumrah 4-0-45-0 (w-1, nb-1), Chakravarthy 4-0-25-0, Kuldeep 4-0-31-1 (w-2), Axar 1-0-8-0, Dube 4-0-33-2 (w-2, nb-1)

INDIA

Abhishek c Rauf b Abrar	74 (39b, 6x4, 5x6)
Gill b Ashraf	47 (28b, 8x4)
Suryakumar c Abrar b Rauf	0 (3b)
Tilak (not out)	30 (19b, 2x4, 2x6)
Samson b Rauf	13 (17b, 1x4)
Pandya (not out)	7 (7b, 1x4)
Extras (W-3)	3
Total (for 4 wkts, 18.5 overs)	**174**

Fall of wickets: 1-105 (Gill), 2-106 (Suryakumar), 3-123 (Abhishek), 4-138 (Samson)
Bowling: Afridi 3.5-0-40-0 (w-1), Ayub 3-0-35-0 (w-1), Abrar 4-0-42-1, Rauf 4-0-26-2 (w-1), Ashraf 4-0-31-1
Result: India won by six wickets.
PoM: Abhishek Sharma
India's next match: vs Bangladesh (Sep 24, Dubai)

Abhishek Sharma scored a blistering 39-ball 74 in India's six-wicket win over Pakistan at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium. REUTERS

India colts' overall show thumps Aussies

BRISBANE, PTI: Teen sensation Vaibhav Suryavanshi showed glimpses of his batting prowess before wicketkeeper Abhigyan Kundu and Vedant Trivedi's unbeaten half-centuries powered India U19 to a comprehensive seven-wicket win over Australia U19 in the first Youth ODI here on Sunday.

Batting first after winning the toss, Australia could muster only 225 for nine thanks to an excellent performance by the Indian bowlers.

The visitors then completed the chase with as many as 117 balls to spare at the Ian Healy Oval, with Kundu and Trivedi remaining not out on a masterful 87 and 61 respectively.

The spotlight was on 14-year-old Suryavanshi, and he responded with a blazing 38 off just 22 balls, his innings containing seven fours.

Such was Suryavanshi's dominance that skipper Ayush Mhatre contributed just six runs in a 50-run opening partnership before the latter was dismissed by pacer Hayden Schiller.

Two balls later, Mhatre was sent back by Charles Lachmund, as India suddenly lost two wickets at the same score.

Brief scores: Australia U19: 225/9 in 50 overs (Steven Hogan 39, Tom Hogan 41, John James 77 n.o.; Kishan Kumar 2-59, Henil Patel 3-38, Kanishk Chouhan 2-39) lt to India U19: 227/3 in 30.3 overs (Vaibhav Suryavanshi 38, Vedant Trivedi 61 n.o., Abhigyan Kundu 87 n.o.; Charles Lachmund 2-46). **Result:** India U19 won by 7 wkts. **PoM:** Abhigyan Kundu.

Double delight for Bengaluru's Ishaan

BENGALURU, DHNS: Bengaluru's Ishaan Madesh made up for a disappointing outing in the first race by winning both the races on Sunday in the premier MRF Formula 2000 category to finish the second round of the MMSC FMSCI Indian National Car Racing Championship 2025 on a high at the Madras International Circuit.

With a speed limiter affecting his start on Saturday where he finished third in the first race, Ishaan pulled out all stops to win both the outings quite comfortably to move within two points of championship leader Arjun Chheda from Pune.

Chheda finished second behind Madesh in both races with Bengaluru's Tarun MB completing the podium.

Verstappen cruises in Baku

BAKU, AFP

Four-time champion Max Verstappen cruised to victory for Red Bull in Sunday's Azerbaijan Grand Prix after series leader Oscar Piastri crashed on the opening lap and McLaren failed to clinch the constructors' title.

Driving with supreme authority, the Dutchman led from lights to flag to claim his first win on the unforgiving barrier-lined Baku street track, his second in succession this month, fourth this year and 67th of his career.

Red Bull's Max Verstappen celebrates with the trophy after winning the Azerbaijan Grand Prix at the Baku City Circuit on Sunday. AFP

Verstappen came home 14.609 seconds clear of Mercedes' George Russell, who has been struggling with sickness all weekend, and 19sec clear of Carlos Sainz who scored his first podium and best result since joining Williams from Ferrari this season.

Mercedes' teenage rookie Kimi Antonelli put his run of poor outings behind him by finishing fourth ahead of Racing Bulls' rookie Liam Lawson and Yuki Tsunoda in the second Red Bull—leaving Lando Norris, in the second McLaren, to come home seventh. For Norris, it was a wasted opportunity to exploit Piastri's rare misfortune after the Australian's run of 34 points finishes ended in the Turn Six barriers. He trimmed his title lead by only six points to 25 while McLaren, needing to beat Ferrari by nine points for a second consecutive teams' title missed out, but have seven rounds remaining. In winning, Verstappen completed more laps as race leader this season than Norris and delivered the sixth 'grand slam' of pole, win and fastest lap in his career.

Fritz topples Alcaraz

SAN FRANCISCO, AFP: American Taylor Fritz shocked world No. 1 Carlos Alcaraz 6-3, 6-2 as Team World swept all four matches at the Laver Cup on Saturday to power into the lead in the global tennis event.

Fritz, ranked fifth in the world, notched his first victory over the Spanish superstar after three previous defeats, including in the semifinals at Wimbledon.

Swiatek wins

Iga Swiatek battled back from a disastrous start to win the Korea Open on Sunday, beating Russia's Ekaterina Alexandrova 1-6, 7-6 (7/3), 7-5 in the final, reports AFP from Seoul.

The world No. 2 dropped the opening set after an error-strewn performance drastically out of keeping with her dominating form this week in Seoul, but came back to take the title in three sets.

Yadav leads Goa fightback

BENGALURU, DHNS: Lalit Yadav's unbeaten century took Goa past the 300-run mark against KSCA Secretary's XI on the opening day of the semifinals of the Dr (Capt) K Thimmappiah memorial tournament in Alur on Sunday.

Yadav (100 not out), who reached his century in the closing moments of the day, had crucial stands with the lower-order to take his side to 323/9 at stumps. Samit Dravid, Madhav Bajaj and Abhishek Ahlawat took a couple of wickets each to ensure Goa didn't put up a big total.

Prior to Yadav's knock, Abhinav Tejrana (88) did the bulk of the scoring to take his side near 150 while the Goa top-order crumbled around him. Yadav then took over from Tejrana at 149/5, having two crucial 50-odd-run stands with Kashab Bakle (31) and Mohit Redkar (35).

Meanwhile, the other semifinal at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium here saw Madhya Pradesh reach 262/2 against Himachal Pradesh at the stumps. Yash Dubey (140) fell on the last ball of the day to Rohit Kumar (1/31) following a 228-run stand for the second wicket with Himanshu Mantri, who will resume the Day 2 morning three runs away from a century.

Yash Dubey. DH FILE PHOTO

Brief scores: Semifinals: At Alur 1: Goa: 323/9 in 90 overs (Manthan Khutkar 27, Abhinav Tejrana 88, Lalit Yadav 100 n.o., Kashab Bakle 31, Mohit Redkar 35; Samit Dravid 2-18, Madhav Bajaj 2-77, Abhishek Ahlawat 2-78) vs KSCA Secretary's XI.
At M Chinnaswamy Stadium: Madhya Pradesh: 262/2 in 89.4 overs (Yash Dubey 140, Himanshu Mantri 97 n.o.) vs Himachal Pradesh.

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